

CONTEMPLATIONS
AMONGST
VINCENT'S ROCKS,
Near the City of BRISTOL:

In which there is a DESCRIPTION, not only
of the said ROCKS, and of the WOODS,
and a peculiar FLOWER that grows
upon and amongst them, but also

Of the HOT-WELLS, so
famed through all the
known World.

Likewise of the RIVER
that runs between the
said Rocks, and of *Birds*
and other *Animals* that
inhabit and feed there-
on.

Some Notice also is taken
of the *Ships* and other
Vessels that are almost
continually passing and
repassing to and from
the City of *Bristol*.—
With some Observa-

tions that have been
made at different Times
on board some Ships,
whilst they have been
waiting for a Wind in
KINGSDOWN.

The whole not only en-
tertaining to the *Reader*,
but also tending, thro'
the Divine Blessing, to
the Conviction, Con-
version, and Comfort
of the Redeemed of the
LORD; as every Object
treated of is attempted
to be Spiritualized.

By the Rev. JOHN DOLMAN,
Vicar of *Chalk* in KENT.

The SECOND EDITION,
Corrected and Improved.

PSALM xxix. 9.

*And in his Temple [or WORLD] doth every one [or THING]
speak of his Glory.*

L O N D O N :

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CONTEMPLATIONS
AMONGST
VINCENT'S ROCKS.

LETTER I.

My dear Brother,

✠ SACRED Writ informs us, that
✠ S ✠ *Isaac* went out at Evening-tide to
✠ meditate, a Time every Way suit-
able to the Employment. The Hum
and Hurry of the Day being at an End,
which, whilst existing, often breaks in
upon, and disturbs the most intense
Thought; at least with me I find that
it often does, and therefore unfits me,
at that Time, for the pleasing, profitable
Work. Sol now hath withdrawn his
A 2 illuminating

illuminating Beams from this Part of our Globe, and the dark Curtains of the Evening are dropt. Hurry, at least in my Habitation, is at an End; all is hush and quiet, and I am set down to write a few Lines unto you.

I have been thinking rather extensively of my Situation in Life, and upon a Variety of Things consequent thereof. The Situation of my House*, I believe, is the most romantic that you ever saw; close to the Back of which is a Spring of Water of a medicinal Quality, commonly called, *The New Hot-Wells*. This Water, when first pumped, is near as warm as the Milk just taken from the Cow. And it is of the same degree of Heat Winter and Summer, though its Warmth is most perceptible in the former.

But it is not my Design to write a Treatise upon the Nature and Qualities of this Water. That is already done by Persons more conversant in medicinal Properties than ever I shall be: Nevertheless, a few Cases wherein I have known it to be useful, I will, by this Method, transmit unto you. The first Instance

was,

* Where the Author then lived.

was, a young Woman, who, to all Appearance, was hasting to the Grave as fast as a Consumption could carry her, had a Lodging at the House: She drank the Water regularly, and in less than a Fortnight, found Relief beyond Description: Within a Month her Colour, which had long forsook her Cheeks, returned, and her wasted Body began to fill; and she soon became a Stranger to the former Complaints of Weakness, &c. and in a short Time was perfectly recovered.

The second was in a Gentlemen who lodged in the House, that had a Diabetes very bad; and in less than Six Weeks, when he went away, declared that he was as free from it as any Man in the World.

The third, whom I knew to find great Advantage, was a Gentleman that had made the Voyage round the World, with the then Commodore *Anson*. He had contracted a violent Spitting of Blood: This Gentleman frequently lodged at a Tavern some Distance from the Place; I suppose, for the sake of such Company as resorted there: And he often told me, that when he lodged three Nights successively at the Well House, and abstained from drinking to Excess, by a regular

Use of the Water, he found himself to be much better.

But the last Instance I shall mention, was of the Rev. *John Wesley*, A. M. late Fellow of *Lincoln College, Oxford*, who likewise lodged in the House. When he first came, his once active Body, seemed as if it had nearly, very nearly, worn out his Countenance; he looked as if a greedy Consumption had determined soon to devour him: The pale Messenger's Harbingers appeared to have more than laid Hands upon him, to put a Period to his Days: But in less than three Weeks God so blessed the Water to him, which he regularly drank, that he was enabled to set out on his *Cornish* Circuit; which, if I mistake not, extends almost to the Land's End, preaching every Day.

☞ There are large Quantities of this Water bottled, and sent to different Parts of the World. Being one Day in the Well, and observing how the limpid Streams came through the Bowels of the Earth, the following Words entered my Mind:

Balsamic Streams flow from its Veins,
From hence sent different Ways,
To heal the Sick, to ease their Pains,
And lengthen out their Days.

Should you inquire, what I have learned from all this? I answer as follows, First, the dismal Nature of Sin; as the sad Effects of it so evidently appear in the Persons that attend to be healed: Certainly there never had been any Disease of any sort whatever, if there had been no Sin; for, as Death entered into the World by Sin, so did all its Attendants. The lingering or more hasty Consumption; the racking Stone; the excruciating Gravel; the weakening and troublesome Diabetes; the disagreeable and destructive Spitting of Blood; and every other Disorder, whether of Body or Mind, had their Birth in the first Sin that Man committed: And are neither more nor less, than some of the sad Fruits of a sinful Nature. I know it is become almost fashionable now to deny the Doctrine of Original Guilt, though all Men, more or less, feel the direful Effects of it every Day they live: But it is nevertheless true, because the Belief of it, in this Age of Error and Obscurity, is scarcely to be found. The enlightened Mind is taught the Sinfulness of human Nature, from a Variety of Things; such as the Pride of one, the Covetousness of another,

another, the Uncleanneſs of a third ; and by all the Wickedneſs he ſees or hears in the World, and from what he feels in his own Soul ; the various Evils that daily ariſe there, and which none but God and himſelf is acquainted with, becauſe reſtrained in a great Meaſure by Grace, and by that Means hid from mortal Eyes, convinceth him that Man is a fallen Creature ; and, if left unto himſelf, would run into all manner of Wickedneſs with Pleaſure and Delight. His Heart being prone to Evil as the Sparks do upward fly, ſatiſfieth him of the Validity of thoſe Scriptures which concur in the Deſcription of the *Deceitfulneſs and deſperate Wickedneſs* of the human Heart. ſee Jer. xvii. 9.

One Day, viewing the Rock from whence the Water flows, and obſerving the many Rivulets that gently proceed from it, the following Reflections drew my Attention : Firſt, how firm it ſtood ; ſo impregnable, that no Power but that of the almighty God, could poſſibly remove it. And there is no leſs reaſon to believe, that there will be a Continuance of thoſe ſalutary flowing Streams till Time ſhall be no more, when a general Conflagration

Conflagration shall deprive every Mortal of an earthly Existence; and the tremendous JEHOVAH apply them to those Uses which He in his great Wisdom shall think meet. But whilst they continue in their present State, some profitable Inferences may be drawn from them. The Rock, though faintly, yet in some measure represents *the Rock of Ages*, which never can be removed through all the wasting Days of Time: And the unnumbered little Streams, of different Magnitude, to the Multitude of Blessings that have and yet do flow from Him to the human Race, ever since, nay before they had a Being, but in Purpose; for doubtless, whatever good Thing Man is made Partaker of, does not devolve to him as the Effects of Time and Chance, but from the Goodness and Love of God, *who is the Giver of every good and perfect Gift*, James i. 17.

It is probable that this Fountain lay long latent before its Streams issued forth; and when they did spring out, it is more than probable that none of those who first beheld them felt their healing Virtue; that being reserved for some in after Space. So the Love of God to us

poor Worms, lay in Himself as a Fountain from Eternity; and when first discovered, the earliest Beholders of it shared not in the same*, it being reserved for Creatures then not made†.

These Rocks are extremely hard, so that their very Substance seems like bolted Gates if possible to prevent the flowing of those restoring Streams; nevertheless, their kind Bowels afford them a chearful Passage.

A

* Angels, doubtless, were the first Discoverers of God's Love to Man, in their seeing the Mediator set up in Heaven before Time: Read *Proverbs*, Chapter viii. and *Hebrews* i. — But God's Love through Him was not made for any of their Race.

† Whoever will be at the Trouble, if it may be so called, to read the Account of Salvation by Christ, as it stands in the Bible, will find *that God is Love*; and that from Love eternal flowed, and yet flows, every Blessing to his Church and People, both before the Foundation of the World, and through every revolving Age of the same. Hence we read not only that *God is love*; but that God chose his People in the Son of his Love before the Foundation of the World. And that his sending his Son into the World, (*Eph. i. 4.*) 'to save such as should believe in Him, was only the Effect of his Love. Strongly therefore does *St Paul* argue for the Comfort of distressed Christians, *Rom. viii. 32.* *He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all Things?*

A striking Emblem of Justice and Mercy; the former seems diametrically opposite to the latter, and as if resolved to yield no Passage for it; and yet it does with Pleasure and Delight; for *Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace kiss each other*, Psal. lxxxv. 10.

The Clearness and Unmixedness of the Water, have led me to think of the Purity of the Love of God, and how far different it is from that Love which is in Mortals found; for they often love from selfish Principles, either on account of Favours received or expected, or on account of some good Quality they apprehend to be in the Object of their Love; but it is not so with God: It is impossible that He could receive any Favour from Man to procure his Love, seeing that he loved Man before Man had a Being. Neither was his Love to Man with a View to attract any Love from him again, in order to reap any Thing therefrom, to make himself more great, wise or happy: For to Compleateness, and such is God, Addition cannot be. And after the deepest and most scrutinizing Searches are made, to know why
 GOD

God should love his Creature Man, it must be solved into this, and this alone, because he would love.

How vain then is the Imagination of many, who suppose that the Misery of Man moved him to Pity? If Misery is to Him a sufficient Inducement to Pity, then surely God would have pitied the fallen Angels, for they are miserable beyond the Description of Mortals Pen, or happy Angels Tongue: And in that State of Wretchedness are to remain for ever. Mercy was never designed for them: That darling Attribute of God smiles on the human Species only; and towards them it was in his Heart from all Eternity, though not manifested unto them for whom it was, until their Need required it. And at which Manifestation of the same, who can conceive the Joy that warmed and swelled each guilty Breast. *Eden*, whilst under Guilt they were, spoiled of its Charms, became a desert Waste; but now it more than teems with Joys before never felt. For all its Sweets before Disobedience, tho' many, were but the Sweets of Creation; but now it buds, it blooms, it bears the richest Clusters of redeeming Mercy! O
the

the happy Moments now enjoyed, tho' but few, before driven out to till the Ground from whence he first was taken. Trace we a little the Steps pursued in making this Discovery. Doubtless but the Hearts of the self-ruined Pair trembled when they heard the Voice of the Lord God in the Cool of the Day, as in the Garden he took his stately Walks: Self-convicted, self-condemned; they fly to the Trees to find a Hiding-place from his Presence, whose Word did plant them all. O the poor Shifts of guilty souls when God appears!

Speak, ye Trees of *Eden's* Garden, thick and shady as ye were, to break Sol's scorching Beams and sheath his piercing Rays; could you draw a thickening Veil, and blind Omniscience? Could you hide or screen from Him, before whom Death and Hell is of their Covering stript, and ever naked stand. Methinks I hear the late happy, but now wretched Pair, reflecting on each other; the Man his Wife, with heavy Blame he loads, for listening to the Serpent's Voice; the Woman, with no less Weight, on him reflecting for leaving her alone Temptation for to meet: Each itself excusing;

excusing; till constrained to come forth, Account to give to Him that made them; and from whom Destruction now to them seemed sure. *Adam, where art thou?* said GOD. *I heard thy Voice, and being naked, was afraid, and hid myself;* the Criminal replied. Thus one Sin committed, in its Train hath many: Disobedience first, and then Lies, if possible to hide it even from the Face of Him to whom all Thoughts are known, even long before conceived. Excuses then he makes; his Wife his Footsteps follows. Bowed down with Guilt and Shame, in Horror wrapt, with fearful Expectation of Lightning's Flash, or Thunder's louder Voice, to finish their Existence, GOD speaks a chearing Word, promiseth a Deliverer: *The Woman's Seed shall bruise the Serpent's Head.* At which, as before observed, their Breasts were filled with Joy, and *Eden* with redeeming Fruit was hung.

The Waters we have under Consideration have ere now been instrumental in bringing to my Mind that Fountain which was opened, and yet stands open, for Sin and Uncleanness. And how far it excels every other Fountain, Words are insufficient to express! Other Fountains,

tains, as well as this I am treating of, may and often do great Things in repairing decayed Constitutions; but that precious Fountain heals every Wound that Sin has made in those who are enabled to wash therein, be it ever so deep: Nay, not only heals, but eradicates every guilty Spot; though deep *as Scarlet-dye, or red as Crimson-bue*. How stupid then are those who obey not the Voice of God, nor reason with Him, to be made *white as Snow, or like the milky Wool?* Isa. i. 18.

I hardly find a Person labouring under any bodily Disorder, but who endeavours to surmount it. But out of a World of Sinners, it evidently appears, it is but few that concern themselves about their spiritual Diseases; and of them that do, how plain is it that there are but few who think as they ought, by their seeking a Cure diametrically opposite to God's appointed Way.—His Way is to be healed by Grace thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus. But they, though deepest Fools, more wise than God, by *Works* alone, or joined to CHRIST, Salvation will pursue; and therefore in the End most surely miss of it. Many of Heaven safe will dream; for it is but a Dream; till they
from

from its Gates are sent, and find them ever shut their Entrance to prevent. For it is written, that *many shall seek to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but shall not be able.* Hard saying, perhaps some may think! but hard as it appears to be, we find it will proceed from the Mouth of Him, within whose Lips are *the Law of Kindness.*

One Day viewing once more the Variety of Streams that issued from the same Rock, it induced me to think afresh of the innumerable Rivulets of Goodness that flowed, and are yet flowing from God, towards the Workmanship of his Hands; in attempting which, I soon found myself lost beyond Description: For surely their Number is so great, inasmuch as *in him all Things live, and move, and have their Being*; that none but God himself can number them. As to my own Part, I feel every Moment I live to be a fresh Instance of Mercy flowing to me through my Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST; therefore let others sport themselves as long as they please in their Cards and Dice, in their Hawking and Hunting, their Balls and Assemblies, with the Harpers of Hell in their Gardens of Pleasure,

Pleasure, &c. I will delight myself in the Lord Jesus, who every Day confers fresh Favours upon me. And, O! what Repast have I from Him frequently whilst I am permitted to sit beneath his Shadow; and he calls me his Friend; yea, styles me his Beloved, and bids me eat and drink abundantly of such Bread and Water as the World knows nothing of, even that Bread which came down from Heaven, which is Angels Food; and the Water which issues forth from that River that gladdens the Inhabitants of the upper World!

When I look upon the Persons that attend these Places, by their Appearance in Life I judge most of them to be Persons of Fortune, their yearly Incomes perhaps very large; through which their Table knows no Barrenness, every Day yielding great Plenty, and vast Variety of every needful and entertaining sort of Food. Hard Labour, which many of their Fellow-Mortals are exercised with, they are Strangers to; with a thousand Difficulties and Inconveniencies that attend narrow Circumstances: Nevertheless, I see that they are not more happy than People of the lowest Class; this appears by
their

their constant Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction, with their hurrying from Place to Place to kill their precious Time. So that to a Demonstration it is visible, that a Man's Happiness does not consist in the Abundance that he hath. Poor Men, many of them imagine that rich Persons must necessarily be happy; but it is a mistaken Notion, for Experience testifies that all created Things are insufficient to make Mankind so: And that the Soul of Man is of a more noble Nature than to be satisfied with perishing Things. It is only that which is of its own Duration; and not all that is so can do it; no nothing but what is suitable to it will so do, which is GOD alone; and for which Reason it is that High and Low, Rich and Poor, Bond and Free, Male and Female, are all unhappy till their Soul is brought Home to GOD; which is no other Way done than by his Spirit enabling them to believe in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, as having born their Sins, and carried their Sorrows in his own Body upon the Tree; and as being gone to Heaven as their Forerunner, and set down at the right Hand of GOD to make Intercession for them: Consequently,

ly, that Soul which is disembodied before thus brought home to, and made happy in the Lord her Maker, must remain destitute of Happiness to all Eternity; *for as the Tree falls, so it will remain for ever*; and as Death leaves the Man, Judgment will surely find him.

As to myself, I have no temporal Riches, neither do I desire them; nevertheless, I am not poor: I bless God, I have eternal Treasure laid up in Heaven for me through JESUS CHRIST my LORD, as hath every real Christian; even such Treasure *as Moth cannot corrupt*, and in that Place where no *Thief can break thro' to steal* that Inheritance of mine: No artful Lawyer (though the Ruin of many here) can in any Measure injure. I have a powerful Advocate with God to plead my Cause, even He who is the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Great Estates and large Sums of Money sometimes the right Owners are deprived of by cunning artful Men; but that Treasure of mine in Heaven, even the Father of Cunning, the Devil, cannot touch, much less injure or deprive me of.

It cannot be denied, but that the People who attend this Water in the Season,
do

do it from different Motives: Some for the Sake of the Company and Diversions that then is; and in this Way to slaughter Time, even wasting those golden Moments that GOD has given to Man. Others attend it out of Custom, as constantly as the Season returns, purposing thereby to prevent Diseases and keep off Death. And a few there are, that come from the feeling Necessity that they have of the Water.

Each of these Attendants resemble some Part or other of Mankind in their Attendance in the Courts of GOD's House: Many there are, who go to the Sanctuary only to meet with Company, it being a Place of public Resort: To these, the Service of the Place is tedious; and the more so, as it is the more Spiritual. They have no Eyes to behold its Comeliness, though GOD should be worshipped in the Beauty of Holiness: No Ears to hear its soft and delighting Melody, though but little inferior to the Music of Seraphs: No Palate to taste its Sweetness, though it is the Bread of Angels: No Hand to feel its Power, though it hath quickened Thousands of dead Souls: Nor no Smell to take in its Sweets, tho'
its

its Odour not only regales the Spirits of the Saints below, but even of the Just made perfect; yea, it is a sweet Smell in the Nostrils of God himself!

By some God's House is frequented, because Time lies heavy upon them, and they know not how to fill it up; or perhaps the Lord's Day proves wet, and therefore unfit to walk abroad, or it may be their Fortune or Trade will not support their revelling every Sabbath-day, as is their Practice on some of them. Nay sometimes, so mean a Thing as a new Suit of Clothes will draw them to the Temple to make a Shew thereof, and frequently, in the Country, a Bargain to make with a neighbouring Farmer, will attract and draw to the Place of public Worship. Thus blindly do many in a dull Round go on, and that for many Years, killing, slaughtering, what shall I say? destroying Time, one Moment of which, when lost, cannot be brought back; no not at the Price of all the Gold and Gems the Earth or Sea affords.

Others there are whose Motives seem more refined, yet no more benevolent than those already mentioned, as they are no more scriptural, when tried by that

that unerring Touchstone. These are generally very formal in all that they do. Sabbath-Days, Prayer-Days, and Lectures, they will not miss either: If possible, at the LORD's Table these will have a Place; hoping thereby to prevent eternal Death, and procure from God a Pardon of their Sins at the Judgment-Day, and be at once taken into Heaven. Dreadful Delusion! miserable Mistake is this. Such dream of Happiness till they awake in Misery. By these, the only Way to Glory is neglected, if not despised: To be saved freely, is to them to have Heaven upon Terms too cheap. A Righteousness without working for it, and a Heaven of Glory by an Act of free Grace, they will know nothing of. The blessed, glorious, peaceful Treasure, is too cheap; therefore they will bring, as they suppose, a Price in their Hands: And in so doing, they both neglect and despise the only Method of Salvation; and therefore GOD will send such away with a *Depart, ye Workers of Iniquity.*

Some few there are, (blessed be God for it, and O that their Number may increase daily!) who feel that they are diseased in their inmost Souls, and therefore have
no

no Rest in their Flesh by Reason of their Sin. These attend Places of public Worship, hoping God, the Fountain of all Blessings, will send the healing Stream of Mercy to them. And O how gracious is the LORD to such! for every one of them have what they attend for, either sooner or later, when the wise Disposer of all Things sees it the best and most proper Time for them. At which the distressing Fear of being banished from his Presence for ever, vanishes away, and they triumph in the Merits of a Redeemer's Blood; and know that the Wound that Sin had made in their Frame, is healed: Because GOD giveth unto such his Spirit, which witnesseth with their Spirit they are his Children. O when will that Time come, when Multitudes will be made to feel their spiritual Diseases, (for I read that *a Nation shall be born in a Day*) and be truly sick of Sin, even so sick of it as to lothe it from the very Heart? These only, and not the Whole, will accept of the spiritual Physician; for those who feel not their Wound, think but little of the Balm of *Gilead*, if they think of it at all. And whenever CHRIST is spoken of in their hearing,

as

as the Friend of Sinners, and the Saviour of the Lost, if they believe the Record at all, it is as suitable to others, and not to themselves.

Methinks, I now hear his Word sounding in my Ears, which says, *I am not come to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* With what Speed does he pursue the poor sensible Sinner, till he is overtaken by him? and, being desirous to make him instantly happy, does not tarry the Sinner's lingering Steps back, for that would be much too tedious, but lays him upon his own Shoulder, and brings him Home; on account of which, how great the Joy in Heaven by the Angels of God! The whole Hierarchy thereof strike up their Harps at JESUS' Command, Rejoice with me for I have found one that was lost; yea, each in Heaven sings, *He was dead, but is now alive; he was lost, but is now found!*

My Paper being nigh filled, I shall dismiss the Subject, and close my Letter; my resuming of it again will be according to the Acceptation these Lines find with you: So, my dear Brother, farewell! May the God of Heaven always let me and you know that his everlasting Arms
are

are beneath us, to bear us up through all our Trials, safe to his Heavenly Kingdom and Glory. *Adieu.*



L E T T E R II.

My dear Brother,

MY receiving a few Lines from you gave me much Satisfaction, and I hope that I shall always, through the Assistance of my God, endeavour to practise what you there so strongly recommended; for sure no Work so pleasant, when assisted by Divine Grace, as that you mention. To be doing and speaking for God, a noble Employment! O the Honour of being an Ambassador for Heaven! God grant that I may with Faithfulness discharge so important a Trust. And as you express some Satisfaction in my Account and Observations on the Place where I dwell, and the Things that occur there; and likewise desire me to go on: I once more take my Pen in Hand to resume the Subject.

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I may say, that Heaven seems to have situated me at present in a Place calculated for Meditation, and given me that Turn of Mind which some have for so profitable a Work ; so that instead of writing a long Letter or two, I might pen a Volume of no small Size for your Amusement, and, I hope, Improvement.

My Dwelling-House is situated both beneath and upon a Rock, near to a River-side, (even such a River as *Job* mentions, when he says, speaking of God, *He cutteth his Rivers amongst the Rocks*) where every Vessel passeth that goes to and from the City of *Bristol*: The Thoughts of which have, many Times, been very entertaining ; and I hope, in some Measure, profitable: For sometimes when I have ascended the Cliffs in scorching Summer Days, and Sol, with his piercing Beams, had well-nigh robbed me of my Breath, and rendered my House of Clay weak and faint, so that I have made Part of the Cliff my Seat, in order to recover my almost-deserted Life ; various have been my Thoughts upon what my Eyes have then seen, and my Ears heard. It appeared to me, that within my View and Hearing was
enough,

enough, yea, more than enough, to convince the stoutest Atheist of the Being of a God. Sure these towering Rocks are not the Effects of Time and Chance, but the Workmanship of an Omnipotent Hand, who also laid the Foundations of the Earth! That hilly Landskip, so beautifully enamelled with a Variety of Greens on the distant Side of the River, never gave itself a Being; neither were the feathered Inhabitants of it the Authors of their own Existence. No, they each and all of them declare that they were formed, and that He that formed them is Almighty.

Whilst I was thus musing, my Thoughts flowed apace on the Beauty of the distant Grove; where every Tree, Bush, and Shrub, appeared in its beautiful Livery, whilst the Sun smiled thereon with its cheering Beams, every one of them seemed to laugh and sing; but on a sudden, as fast as the Clouds could well travel, one of them stepped between, and veiled the life-giving Orb from the rejoicing Wood; and Sorrow seemed to sit upon its Brow. Alas! thought I, how much is this like the State of a Christian; for whilst Jesus, the blessed Sun of Righteousness,

ousness, smiles upon him, he rejoiceth, and is glad, like the distant Hill, whilst the natural Sun vouchsafes its unveiled Face unto it. And, as the Beauty of the Trees are displayed by the vivid Rays of that Heavenly Body, so the Virtues of a gracious Soul are discovered brightest when JESUS vouchsafes to smile upon him: Then indeed CHRIST is precious to him; then all the World is as Dung in Comparison to the lovely Saviour; then the Language of his Heart is, *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth I desire in Comparison of Thee.* Then the Crowns of Kings, and Palaces of Princes, are but empty Toys, fit only to divert poor Mortals with, who are without a CHRIST. Not that I imagine all Kings and Princes are unacquainted with the *Messiah*; no, far be such a Thought from me; but this I am sure of, that a Soul, truly gracious, prefers even the Reproach of CHRIST, far beyond the Treasures of the richest Court. This I speak from my own Experience; which Experience, I am persuaded, and ever shall be, is not enthusiastical, whilst I find the Scriptures declare, as they do, in support of it. I the more freely mention this, because

because I have reason to believe I am speaking to one to whom God hath given of his Spirit; and that this hath often been the State and Condition of your own Soul.

O, my dear Brother, how sweet has Jesus been unto me many a Time; yea, when distressed on every Side, from the World, from Relations, from false Brethren, and from some who, I believe, in some Measure, love the Redeemer? Yea, and much sweeter still has He been, when I have been oppressed by a wicked Heart, fired by Satan, and when Mount *Sinai* threatened, and *Moses* said, "Pay the Debt due to God." When these Things have exercised my Soul, many Times I have been enabled by the Spirit of God, through Faith, to behold Jesus in my Stead, as having fulfilled the Law for me, and therefore the End of it for Righteousness unto me: I have indeed been enabled by the Eye of Faith, to see Him *bearing my Sins in his own Body upon the Tree*; and my Soul hath felt the Truth of that Word of his, that dying Word, IT IS FINISHED. Under these Views my Soul has been like the melting Wax; and the more so, for at such Times I

have been enabled to discover, in a great Measure, my original Darkness, and to see, in good Part, the Sinfulness of Sin, by which my Mouth is stopped, and God has all the Glory of my Salvation. Yea, sometimes, has my Soul been carried out in such Lengths towards CHRIST, my Friend, that I have been constrained to cry out, "It is enough, LORD, unless
 "Thou wilt enlarge my Earthen Vessel." And as I have remarked that I have seen the Clouds, as it were, envying the delighted Grove, and step between it and the Sun, and by that Means veiled its smiling Face; so have I, at Times, felt it with my Soul; for, even now, when I have been solacing myself in the View and Enjoyment of Him that is *fairer than the Children of Men, sitting under his Shadow, and proving his Fruit sweet unto my Taste*, some inbred Corruption or other hath arisen in my Heart, and as effectually veiled his Life-giving Face from me, as the thickest Cloud hath covered and hid the Face of the natural Sun from the Grove: And although I know that He is as near me as before, yet how unlike what I was a few Minutes past; then my Chariot-Wheels ran swiftly, now they drag

drag as if almost void of Motion: Then I was carried as on the Wings of the Wind, now moving as slow as a Worm of the Earth: Then I almost forgot where I was; but am now convinced that I dwell in a Body of Sin and Death. LORD! by these thy different Operations on my Soul, do thou be pleased to become more and more precious unto me.

I hope that the long Digression I have now made will not be burdensome. I assure you, that great Part of what I have now written flows from a grateful Heart. But to return to my former Account.— In this ascending Wood there are many Inhabitants, as I have already hinted; each of them having something very instructing, have taught me many useful Lessons, which I hope never will be forgotten by me. O, how doth Divine Wisdom shine in them! I remember, that when I was a Lad, I often roamed through such Places as the other Side is, to find the Habitations of these feathered Minstrels; which if I then chanced to discover, the Place I marked exactly, to find at any Time I thought more proper: But now I reflect upon the Beauty of each Cell; some I remember were made with

Moss, and lined with the softest Down, others with Hair, and some plaistered smooth with Clay ; so exquisite was the Workmanship, that I believe it would baffle the most skilful Artist to form the like. Who gave them this Understanding in Mechanism? Surely none but God himself, who is the Fountain of all Wisdom. The Cleanliness of these little Creatures, if regarded by many of the Human Species, is enough to make them blush.

I can likewise remember that frequently it was with much Difficulty I could ever find the Bush or Tree a second Time where the Nest was ; but these Residents of the Grove, through the untrodden pathless Air, instantly find their Home ; notwithstanding a thousand Trees and Bushes crowd the Place, each knows its own Abode ! With what Swiftnes have I seen them pierce the almost-impenetrable Wood ! Surely no one taught them so to do but that God who made them, and *for whose Pleasure they are and were created !* What Wisdom hast thou given them, O LORD, in all their Affairs of Life ! It is none but thyself that hath instructed them, although so used to Liberty,

berty, to abridge it so as to become Prisoners in their Nests, almost to starving, while they sit upon their Eggs to hatch their tender Young! It is Thou, and only Thou, who hast given them Understanding to know what is proper for their Food, and what is not : Why don't they, with equal Haste, catch at the poisonous Berry of the Nightshade, as the Cherry or the Plumb? Is it because its outside Form is not equally attracting to the Eye? No; but Thou hast informed them, Death is in the former, and Nourishment in the latter. O how happy are they, thus taught of God, and obedient to his Will! And how incessantly do they shew forth his Praise, each with his different Note, yet all speaking the same Language, Thankfulness! The Lark, as she mounts Heavenwards, with her melodious Voice; the Thrush, the Nightingale, and Others, whilst they sit upon the wavering Sprig, with their warbling Throats sing Praises to their God. O that every mortal Man would receive some Instruction from these winged Songsters! Hath God given them Wisdom, how much more hath he given of it unto the Sons of Men? Hath he shewn them what is, and what is not

Good; what larger Discoveries herein hath he made unto Man! Hath He made known to the Birds of the Air what will be Death unto them, if possessed; and what will nourish and sustain Life, if enjoyed; much more manifest hath He made this unto Man, by His Prophets, by His Son, by His Apostles, and by His Spirit and Ministers! And yet, how unlike the well-nigh countless Tribes of Chaunters in Return of Thanks and Praise, unless continued Acts of Rebellion, and daring Wickedness, can be construed Gratitude; for how do these increase and abound every Day, amongst all Ranks and Degrees of Men, even from the Palace to the Cottage, amongst Priests and People? So that it may, with great Truth, be said of us, as it was once said of *Jerusalem*, *There is no Soundness* (or but very little) *in us*. May you and I, my dear Friend, with all that love the once-bleeding Lamb, not only imitate the Birds of the Air in Gratitude, but far excel them, inasmuch as the Blessings we are made Partakers of, are of a more noble Nature, such as the Almighty eternally provided for us, and CHRIST with his own Blood in Time introduced into this wretched World of ours for us, and
has

has since communicated unto us by his Spirit. O the Height and Depth of the Love of God! How immeasurable, how boundless, how inexpressible! Here I must, as I am able, reflect upon the unsearchable Riches of his Grace to us-ward, that God should leave His Heaven, and lay His Glory by, to do us Good, and only so to do become like one of us; Sin only excepted: Did I say, *like* one of us; yea, much lower did he stoop; for we yet, of his Mercy, have a Place where to lay our Head, as the Birds have their Nests; but our Redeemer, by purchasing us, became destitute, and had not a Place in this World that might be called his own, where to lay his often wearied Limbs; yea, for our Sakes, what did He not suffer from the Cradle to the Cross? Witness his low Appearance in the Stable, wrapt in swaddling Clothes, amongst the Beasts of the Field:—His Flight from *Herod's* Rage into *Egypt*, in tender Infancy: His Scorn, Contempt, and constant Infamy, amongst the Jews, his Countrymen: His Agony in the Garden. O how great must have been his Anguish there, when he drank the bitter Cup; and, in an Agony, did sweat as it were great Drops of Blood?

What

deep Distress must he be acquainted with, when His righteous Soul was sorrowful unto Death? When not an open Enemy. but one of his own Family, lifted up his Heel against Him, and betrayed Him into the Hands of cruel Men, who had long thirsted for His Blood; and the rest of His Disciples forsook Him, and fled? At which Time, how did *Jerusalem* ring at the apprehending of Him whom the Priests had often misrepresented as a vile Impostor, but our God and King!

Methinks, I now see Him taken by the armed Band, treated as a Thief, bound and led through the Streets of the City, whilst the gazing Multitude cry, *Ah, ah, so would we have it to be: Fie upon thee! Fie upon thee!* And at length brought to the High Priest's House; and *Peter*, following after, trembling for the Fate of his beloved Master. False Witnesses are procured, by those who, by Office, are bound to guard the Truth, and suppress a Lie, to lay to His Charge Things that He never knew: At length the Lamb, who dumb had been, opened his Mouth, and told the Court, "The Son of Man by
 " them should be seen sitting on the Right
 " Hand of Power, and coming in the
 " Clouds

“ Clouds of Heaven.” At which, how enraged, what Madness then appeared, even to the rending of their Clothes, and crying out, *Blasphemy, Blasphemy!* then did some of them spit in His precious Face, and buffet Him; and others smote Him with the Palms of their Hands; as poor *Peter*, with Sorrow of Heart, was a Witness unto, in whom I see the Frailty of the Stoutest when left unto Himself. *Peter* had, not long before, told his LORD, that though all forsook Him, he would not; for he was ready to go, not only to Prison, but also to Death with Him. And, as a Proof of it, when the Officers came to apprehend his Master, he drew his Sword, and smote the High Priest’s Servant, and cut off his Ear. But now, being charged with being a Disciple of Jesus by a simple Daniel, he denies the Charge, and repeatedly cursed and swore that he never knew the Man. * How much like *Peter* I should act, every Day’s Experience testifies, if left unto myself. May GOD grant that I may never be so left; but if ever it should be the Case,
may

* Some Writers inform us, That the Words *Peter* made Use of were, “ May I be damned if I “ know the Man ! ”

may the LORD look upon me as he did on *Peter*; and may His Look produce the same Effect, and bitterly may I weep.

But to return to my Redeemer, who is equally dear to me in His Sufferings, as in His Reigning; under or upon his Cross, as upon his Throne: I cannot but mark how the wicked Priests and Elders (in almost every Age of the Church the bitterest Enemies of God and His pure Religion) conspire to put Him to Death, whilst they ordered him to be shackled, and led away, *as a Lamb to the Slaughter, to Pontius Pilate*, the Roman Governor, before whom he stood, *as a Sheep before her Shearers*, dumb; charged with Crimes not a few, nor in their Nature small; though He was *without Sin; neither was Guile found in His Mouth*. At His Behaviour the Heathen Judge was more affected than the pretended Friends of God; and was convinced, that Envy alone was the Cause of His being delivered up to him; and therefore sought to release Him, and would fain have done it; but their complicated Malice chose a Murderer's Discharge before that of the LORD of Life and Glory! O Prejudice, thou Brat of Hell, thou Spawn
of

of the bottomless Pit, nursed by Ignorance; what hast thou not, what wilt thou not do? Though thou wearest a religious Garb, thou preferest Vice to Virtue, wicked Men before the truly Pious; yea, makest choice of a Murderer and Destroyer before a Saviour! *Pilate* ordered our Saviour to be scourged, with an Intention, as I apprehend, to move his Accusers to Pity, if Pity could be produced in Breasts so steeled as theirs were. But this would not do; nevertheless, by it was accomplished that Prophecy, *I gave My Back to the Smilers*, *Isai.* l. 6.

O here I must stop a few Moments, and view Him at the Whipping-Post, and drop a few Tears at His Anguish, whilst I mark his Hands, which *stretched out the Heavens as a Curtain*, *Psal.* civ. 2. tied thereunto, and his Back stripped naked, to be made like a ploughed Field, and that his Blood might fill the *long Furrows thereof*, *Psal.* cxxix. 3. With what Eagerness and Delight did the Executioner lift his Hand, the Instrument of a wicked Heart, to give the weightier Blows? O how did the Whips of Wire make Incisions in his Flesh, so
that

that one might well-nigh *tell all his Bones*, Psal. xxii. 17. During which, the Rulers and the People gaped upon Him with their Mouths, as a ravening and a roaring Lion, and rejoiced in his Affliction.

Now, I think, He might well cry out, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow*, Lam. i. 12. Methinks even this Sight was enough to break Hearts of Stone. But those who sought His Death, more hard than Marble Rocks, were not, could not be satisfied, but proceeded to add one Affliction to another; for having loosed Him from the bloody Tree, having fed their Vulture's Eyes upon Him there, He must be taken into the Common-Hall, where a painful Crown of Thorns was pressed on His dear Head, which Pressure made the keen Thorns His Temples enter, and let out Blood from every Vein; so that *His Visage was marred more than any Man's, and His Form more than the Sons of Men*, Isai. lii. 14. Upon Him also did they put a purple Robe, and, for a Scepter in His Hand, a Reed, by Way of Ridicule and Mockery; and then bowed their Knees before Him

Him with, *Hail! King of the Jews:* Spitting again in His precious Face, even that Face upon which Angels now with Admiration gaze, and blush while they do so. Then was fulfilled that Scripture, *I bid not my Face from Shame and Spitting*, *Isai. l. 6.* And in these Circumstances *Pilate* once more sought His Release with a *Behold the Man!* *John xix. 5.* But still they must have His Blood, and therefore they accused *Pilate* with being an Enemy to *Cæsar*, unless he put him to Death: Nevertheless, bent upon his Delivery, if possible, he again bid them, *Behold their King*, *John xix. 14.* Enraged, they cried, *Away with him, away with him; crucify him, crucify him.* And when he farther inquired, *Shall I crucify your King?* *ver. 15.* The Reply from them was, *We have no King but Cæsar.* Thus wearied out by them, delivered he the LORD JESUS your Friend and mine, and the Friend of Millions more, to be crucified.

Now what Rejoicings amongst his Enemies; how did the Judgment-Hall with Acclamations ring, and *Jerusalem-*Streets echo back Satisfaction? What Triumph was there now amongst those
who

who long waited for His Blood? How did each strive to shew his Forwardness in the meritorious Work of leading Him out to be crucified; abetted by those Priests who once thought their Church in Danger by him.

Crucifixion, a Death assigned to none but the vilest Miscreants, the most atrocious Offenders; and which, in itself, must be exquisitely painful, it being as follows: The Criminal being fastened to the Cross with Iron Pins or Nails, it was then erected and fixed in the Ground: Consequently the whole Weight of the Body hung upon that which fastened it to the Wood: And thus they served Him whom my Soul loveth. Then was fulfilled another Saying of the Prophet. *Isai. Chap. xi. 12. He shall set up an Ensign for the Nations.* But this Ensign was deeply dyed in Blood, occasioned by the Whips, the thorny Crown, and the Nails that fastened Him to the Cross. Thus being lifted up between Heaven and Earth, as if the one had cast him out, and the other refused him Admittance, his Enemies renewed their former Revilings; and, with Scorn, said, *He saved others, but himself*
he

he cannot save: If he be the Son of GOD, let him come down from the Cross, and we will believe in him, Matt. xxvii. 42. Shooting out the Lip, and shaking their Head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him, Psalm xxii. 7, 8.

Thus, for some Time, hung the dear Immanuel, weak, faint, and expiring; during which Time, Darkness covered the Face of the Earth, and at last he gave up the Ghost; at which the Temple's Vail became more soft than the Beholders Hearts, and rent in twain from the Top to the Bottom, whilst the Earth did quake and tremble, and the solid Rocks strongly convulsed at their Maker's Exit, in the deepest Agony of Distress, burst asunder, to the Astonishment and Conviction of the commissioned Centurion, that He, that then died, was the Son of GOD. *Matt. xxvii. 51, 52, 53, 54.*

Thus ended the deep Tragedy of my Saviour's Death: And, however unaccountable it may seem, it could not be otherwise, *for all that Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the People* of

of Israel, did, was no more than *what the Hand and the Counsel of GOD before determined to be done*, Acts iv. 27, 28. O the Depth! How *unsearchable are Thy Works*, O GOD, and *Thy Ways past finding out!* He being thus delivered by the *determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of GOD*, Acts ii. 23. occasioned Him to say after His Resurrection, that *thus it behoved CHRIST to suffer*, John xxiv. 46. Mark the Expression; not only *to suffer*, but *thus to suffer*, in the very same Manner, to the same Degree. I am almost lost: What, no fewer Stripes, no less buffetting? &c. No, not one. But for what must he thus suffer? O stupendous Mercy! Amazing Thought! to bring us condemned Rebels near to GOD. He, the spotless Lamb, *was made Sin*; and, being so found, *Jehovah's* righteous Law apprehended him, and his unremitting Justice punished him, *that we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Surely GOD is Love, 1 John iv. 8. Therefore *He so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John iii. 16. And thus was GOD in CHRIST reconciling the World unto Himself,

self, 2 Cor. v. 19. O what Goodness is here! And how far it exceeds any Thing that G O D hath done besides! Angels sinned; and *they remain in everlasting Chains, under Darkness, unto the Judgment of that great Day*, Jude 6. Man also hath sinned; and, though incapable to help himself, hath got a Saviour of God's providing and giving, and such Blessings with Him, that *Eye hath not seen, or Ear heard, neither hath entered into the Heart of Man, fully to conceive*, 1 Cor. ii 9. How far doth this exceed the Blessings conferred on the winged Multitude; and for which they praise God, as I have before taken notice of? O may we not be wanting, but as each Day passeth, strive to excel in blessing Him *who was dead, but is alive again, and liveth for evermore*, Rev. i. 18.

A few Observations more upon the opposite Shore I shall ere long communicate unto you; but at present must let Things rest as they are, with heartily commending you to the Grace of God, which is able to keep you unhurt, even in the Midst of a wicked and perverse Generation.

Adieu.

L E T T E R III.

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My dear Brother,

I N my last, I promised a few Observations more upon the Hill opposite my House ; having now a few Moments Liberty, I once more sit down, and take my Pen so to do. The many different Flowers that I have there seen, are very entertaining ; but a Man of a noble Soul (the ingenious Mr *Hervcy*,) has far exceeded any Thing that I can say upon these, so beautiful a Part of the Workmanship of JEHOVAH-JESUS ; to Him, therefore, I recommend you, with dropping a few Words on one that I do not remember to have found in his Collections : What its proper Name is, I know not ; but I call it the *Bee-Flower*, from its near Resemblance of that Fly ; the Stem of it is from six to nine Inches long, and it hath upon it from four, to more than a Dozen Blossoms, rising one above the other, and are of a faint Violet-colour. I do not remember it to have any Smell ; but when in its Bloom, I never saw one Flower which to me appeared with equal Beauty.

As

As the Leaves of the Bud open, the Inside of it discovers itself exactly like a Bee, both as to Make and Colour, with its hinder Part foremost, and as if its Head was stuck fast in the Heart of the Blossom, with its Wings in a proper Position for flying. This Flower being so curious, caused me to be so particular in the Description of it: Upon taking a Survey of it, I was constrained to admire its Former; at the same Time it impregnated my Mind with Thoughts concerning the Insect it resembled; of which I will speak little from Observations that I have made.

Upon a Time, walking in some Meadows near my House, which the LORD had mantled with green, and beautifully enameled with Flowers of various Sorts, I saw many of those Flies busily employed, as I suppose, extracting Honey from them: Amongst the rest, I saw a few equally employed; and, I apprehend, in the same Work, upon the forbidding prickly Thistle; and, after a Time, having loaded their little Barks, set Sail, or rather with their Wings rowed themselves through the liquid Air to their respective Ports; and there in
their

their different Storehouses disembark'd that precious Treasure, from which many of their Wants, and the Wants of many more, are most profusely supplied: I was led out to admire the Fountain of Wisdom, from whom they received Instruction to carry on their mechanical Employment. I remember that I thought they bore a strong Resemblance of Christian Ministers in some Part of their Work. The whole Body of Christian Professors may be compared to the Field; and their various Writings to the different Flowers and Thistle; and the studious spiritual-minded Minister is enabled to make each that falls into his Hand to be of some Service; yea, even those Tracts whose whole Composition is to be handled with as much Care and Caution as the pricking Thistle. For true Ministers of the Church get Wisdom from those Things, which, to many, hardly seem fit to handle; and by the Whole, through the Grace and Spirit of God, their Soul is filled; and at proper Times, and in proper Places, they, with matchless Delight, unload, to the great Comfort of themselves, and no less Profit and Improvement of many more. I doubt not, my dear
Bro-

Brother, but you have often proved this experimentally in the Course of your Labours. It is now eight or nine Years that * I have been ministerially employed in the Church of God; and though with much Weakness, and in many Temptations, yet I hope I can say, that I have, in some good Measure, found the Observation true. The LORD grant that each of us may more and more so find.

Do not be so cast down; though with myself, and many others, who, I hope, love the LORD a little, and desire to love him more, you are cast out, and disesteemed by many that profess the Name of CHRIST, and would be thought his Ministers and Friends; but, in Fact, are no other than Satan's Agents, and CHRIST's bitterest Foes. Let it comfort your Heart that God owns you, by adding fresh Souls to your Ministry. His thus doing, by me, I assure you, is Matter of Comfort to me; and was it not for the same, and the frequent Tastes I have of the Love of God, I should be very often in a miserable Condition; for I am often tempted to think, that I am to be a Man of

C

Strife,

* This was written in the Year 1755.

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Strife, with many, all my Days ; and if Faithfulness to GOD and CHRIST will occasion it, then so let it be ; I am content, and hope ever to be of the same Mind.

Looking upon the Hill another Time, my Mind was once more drawn out to spiritual Things : It arose from thinking what a strong Resemblance it bore of the Christian Church. Here I saw a Variety of Trees and Bushes, of different Sizes, grow together in Harmony ; each had its peculiar Beauty ; and they all derived it from the same Source. The dropping Rain and cheering Sun contributes each its Aid, that they might flourish and encrease. *Zion's Hill*, in her Prosperity, exactly shadowed out the Church Militant of JESUS ; for in her are Trees of Righteousness, Christians of different Stature ; some having, through the Grace of GOD, been long acquainted with their LORD, have learned to live by Faith upon him. These grow not so conspicuous, perhaps, as many others ; nevertheless, they take deep root downwards, and are not to be removed from the Hope of the Gospel ; like the solid Oak, they stand, repelling Temptation's Winds ; others there are who grow more free, and, to
Ap-

Appearance, faster strip up and flourish ; but for want of a deeper Acquaintance with themselves and God, are often shook, and tremble with a small Gust of Wind. And some that in Stature never exceed the Shrub, with Eyes fixed upon themselves, by Sight, and not by Faith, they walk ; and therefore but very sparingly do they grow : And yet each of these has his peculiar Beauty, and grow together in Unity ; being supplied by one and the same gracious Cause, the alone Cause of all Good, GOD himself ; for He is *as the Dew to Israel*, Hof. xiv. 5. His blessed Spirit descends upon them *as the former and the latter Rain* ; and *the Sun of Righteousness* with his enlivening Rays fructifies their Souls.

But though my Mind is now engaged, in a good Measure, upon the present Beauty, and Excellency of the Hill that I have been speaking of, I have not forgotten the disagreeable Aspect it bore in the last Winter : The then pinching Season well-nigh stript it of all its Beauty, the various Shades of Green, which, in the Summer, was its cloathing, and which are so delightful to the Eye, (a few Evergreens excepted) forsook their Dwelling. The li-

beral Sap that used to feed them, and to which both their Fruitfulness and Beauty were-owing, had then lost great Part of Sol's attracting Power, and therefore was crept back, and sunk into its Root. So that, notwithstanding each Tree kept its Station, the Beauty of the Whole was then much impaired. And is not this the Case of the Church of God, when He brings in upon her the Severity of his Frost? Where is her Beauty then? When the LORD lets loose his North-wind upon her, and nips her forward Buds? Comeliness, in a great Measure, forsakes her: Her Plants, though of the LORD's own planting, many of them look well-nigh dead, and withering; and was it not for one here and there, like the few Evergreens, nothing but the Tokens of Death would be seen in her: Though, in Reality, no more dead than in the most blooming Season. That Love, that Faith, that Zeal, and that ready and willing Obedience, with which it was once adorned and clothed, at this Season is hardly to be discovered. The Graces of the Spirit, which were the Cause of their Support, for wise Ends, perhaps to destroy or prevent the Birth of that destructive

tive Insect Spiritual Pride, is not now so powerfully influenced, and drawn forth by the attractive Power of the great Luminary of the Church, the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In one very peculiar Instance, the Wood figures out the Church of CHRIST, in that it grows upon a Rock; so that many of the Roots of the Trees strike between its Veins; and the Rock, doubtless, affords each of these Nourishment, and preserves them from being rooted up, when the rushing Tempest makes its Entry amongst them, shakes their whole Frame, and much disturbs their Quiet.

So Christians not only stand upon CHRIST JESUS, for He is the Church's Foundation: But those that are truly so, are in Him; who is not only stiled a *Rock*; but, with Propriety, on account of his Immoveableness, *the Rock of Ages*: And their whole Nourishment is from Him; for not only their *Springs* are in him, *Psal. lxxxvii. 7.* but likewise all their Fruit is from Him, *Hosea xiv. 8.* He being their Life, *Col. iii. 4.* and they live, because He lives, *John xiv. 9.* And when the rapid Storm of Temptation, Persecution, and Distress, or the fearful Hurricane

of false Doctrine and Error, make a Shaking amongst them, those who in the Rock are rooted, are preserved from being plucked up, cast down, and destroyed.

Having finished my Observations upon the other Side, I now return nearer Home, and call to Remembrance how it was when I descended from the Top of the ragged Clift. What a Difference did I find? Above was so warm and stifling, all that I could scarce draw my Breath: Beneath all was cool and refreshing, so that new Life seemed to pour in abundantly. It brought fresh to my Mind that Saying of the Prophet *Isaiab*, speaking of *Immanuel*, *He is as the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land*, *Isai. xxxii. 2.* The Travellers to *Zion* meet with many scorching Days in their Heavenly Journey, and fiery Temptations, you know, so try them, that sometimes spiritual Languor, almost to seeming Death, arrest some of them. In these Circumstances, how heavy are their spiritual Feet? How slow their Chariot-Wheels move on in their once-delightful Road? But, if permitted to get under the Shade of the lovely *JESUS*, how refreshing then is every Step of their Journey? For close to, and ever attending this Rock, is
a Brook

a Brook, of which they often drink ; and from its refreshing Quality are enabled to lift up their Head by the Way. GOD, at this Time, commands them to cast all their Care upon him ; and assures them, that He himself cares for them. In this Part of their Race, Satan's Darts lose much of their Power and Force, though winged with all the Ability of Hell. How cheering to their Souls, to find that Promise, with many more, verified ; *When thou passeth through the Fire, I will be with thee, that the Flames thereof may not kindle upon thee*, Isai. xliii. 2. Here they breathe freely. The spiritual Life, which, but a little before, seemed almost departed, now revives and gathers Strength. The late weak and fainting Traveller, now runs the Race which is set before him ; and the Soul feels afresh that CHRIST is its Life.

Whilst I was thus musing upon the Rock, &c. I was led to view, as far as discovered to the Eye, its Firmness ; and thence to think what a Basis is here to build upon. Sure no Storm can overthrow a House here erected, unless the Earth should be removed, and the Foundations thereof be carried away. Thun-

ders may roar, Lightenings may flash from one End of the Heavens to the other, Hail may beat, Rains may descend, Winds may blow; Inundations may rush in with all their impetuous Force; and yet this solid Rock fast would stand, and be more than Proof against all their threatening Efforts.

I then begun to think of the Happiness I possess, in having my Dwelling-House built upon this Rock; but a Thought spontaneously arose; Let thy House be ever so firm, and the Foundation as immoveable as the Earth itself, thou art, as fast as Time can waft thee, travelling to the Grave; and the Day will soon come, when, from hence, thou must make an eternal Remove; and if not found resting upon that Rock, which never can be removed, even the *Rock of Ages*, it would be better for thee if thou hadst never been born: For in that Day, which is called the *great Day of his Wrath*, Rev. vi. 17. when the Fury of the LORD shall break in upon the World with terrible Streams of liquid Fire, all that stand not on Him will be swept away with an overflowing Flood of Vengeance, into a
Lake

Lake of Fire and Brimstone. This put me upon Inquiry into my own State, how it stood with the Almighty ; and I hope that I can say, that through Grace, and Grace alone, my Soul is, by the Power of GOD, laid upon JESUS, the chief Corner-Stone, the *Rock* which GOD himself hath *laid in Zion for a sure Foundation*, *Isai. xxviii. 16.*

My Eye passing further on, I perceived an open Cave* in the Rock ; I could not help thinking (for who can wholly prevent Thought?) what a secure Place it was from Storm and Tempest, let the Winds blow ever so strong, no old House there to tumble about one's Ears, no Tiles to be striped off to let in the falling Rain, but all is dry and safe. This, surely, is a strong Resemblance of the Bridegroom of my Soul: The Words of the Prophet *Isaiab* may be applied unto him ; *Enter into the Rock, and hide thyself in the Dust ; for Fear of the LORD, and for the Glory of his Majesty: For GOD is abundantly glorified by*
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all

* Commonly called *Giants-Hole* ; it stands near the Mid-Way, between the two Hot-Wells, on the East Shore, and near the Top of the Clift.

all that are enabled, through Faith, to enter into JESUS CHRIST †. Therefore let sensible Sinners so do, and there they will, they shall be safe from all the overflowing Storms of GOD's Wrath and Fury, for in CHRIST JESUS the Father is well pleased; and therefore with those that are in Him: And, as a Consequence, CHRIST hath promised, that *because He lives, they shall live also*. O blessed Promise! Heart-cheering Words! Let others talk as they please of their eternal Happiness depending upon the rotten Foundation of their own Faithfulness, I see that mine depends upon the Covenant between the Father and the Son. It is true, I confess, that Unfaithfulness to GOD in my Soul gives me many a sorrowful Hour; and it is very meet and right that it should; for the LORD hath promised, that he will not *take away his loving Kindness from me*; yet he hath declared, that he will *visit my Sins with Stripes, and my Iniquity with Scourges*. I know that he

† By which I mean no more than having a Sense of Special Interest in the Redeemer: For, according to Divine Settlement, CHRIST's People are in Him from *before the Foundation of the World*, Eph. i. 4.

he is a God of unspotted Purity ; and cannot but detest and abhor all Iniquity. O! that he would thoroughly purge the Floor of my Soul ; and, till that Work is done, may I be every Moment upon my Guard against that vigilant Enemy, who is always going about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour ; and if at any Time, through his great Subtlety, he should deceive me, God grant that I may be able to take the Advice of one, whom I greatly esteem for his Work's Sake, who says, " Let Sin break thy Heart, but not thy Confidence." *Amen*: May this be the Case ; may every Transgression against so dear a Friend fill me with the most humiliating Shame ; but may it never be able to strip me of my Faith in Him, who died for Sinners ; yea, the vilest and the worst ; in Him, who never yet did, nor never will have an Eye to what a Sinner hath done, or now does, or ever will do, as a Reason why he should save him, but communicates that Blessing, only because he delighteth so to do.

Farther, this Cave is much gazed at by many passing by, and frequently with Wonder and Astonishment ; and here
ends

ends all their Knowledge of it. And so is the dear Lamb of God, by many, whilst they pass on in the external Observance of his Ordinances; and frequently they seem big with Astonishment and Wonder at his Troubles, Afflictions, and Patience under them all; but no more of him is known by them.

I have heard many, whilst looking upon the Cave, talk much about it, and pretend to describe it in the minutest Manner, though never once within it; so that the Ground of all their Assertions was Hear-say; and, it is very probable, great Part of it from Persons as ignorant as themselves, and therefore as intire Strangers to its Contents.

In the same Manner, many will talk much about Jesus, as if he hung at their Tongues End; yea, will pretend to understand all the Course of his Will, and even to split, as it were, a Hair in Divinity, and look upon every one as corrupt in his Judgment, that don't think exactly as themselves; having a Head full of Speculations, and perhaps the greatest Part, if not all of them, derived from Persons as ignorant as themselves, and as
entire

entire Strangers to *Immanuel*, and what is treasured up in him, or flows to Sinners from and through him.

The Situation of the Cave is such, that it hath but one Way, and that very narrow, by which it can be entered; this occasions the entering into it to be attended with many and great Difficulties; therefore Numbers who have attempted so to do, have stopped short, not being willing to run any further Hazard to know what its Contents are.

So it is with our dear Redeemer: There is but one Way, by which Persons can have a Sense of their eternal Interest in him, to wit, Faith in his Blood: For, however a Sinner may be provided for in the everlasting Covenant, betwixt the Father and the Son, he can have no Knowledge of it, no Intelligence at all of his being in him, until he has it given him to believe the Record that God hath given of his Son. This Believing is frequently attended with many and almost unsurmountable Difficulties, as the truly awakened Sinner finds: And, consequent of which, those who are not so awakened, when proved a little, will proceed no farther,

farther, judging it best *not to be righteous over-much.*

But, notwithstanding so many Difficulties attend entering the Cave under Consideration, there are some who have resolutely entered in, and in a scorching Summer's Day, have found it cool and refreshing; but in Winter, when cold without, and nipping within, it has been warm and cheering; so that at all Seasons it is temperate and agreeable to those who enter thereinto.

And thus, notwithstanding all the Difficulties that attend having a Sense of Interest in CHRIST, through Faith, there are those now who could not be content with the bare Hear-say of the many present Blessings that are possessed by them who know themselves *in Him*; but have exerted a holy Boldness, and a righteous Violence, and proved themselves *in Him*; and with what Pleasure do they view Him as a Saviour, every Way suited to their every Case and Condition; in scorching Days of Temptation, arising from a Sense of having violated a fiery Law, safe are they shadowed with his Wing; and, in the nipping Season of formal Professors,
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He is to those who retain their Sense of Interest in him, cheering and reviving; so suitable is he to their every Case and Want.

And now, my Brother, once more farewell. God give you constant Peace and Joy in believing; and if these scattered Thoughts of mine, conveyed to you in this uncouth Manner, from Time to Time, are in any Measure profitable to your Soul, I doubt not but you have learned to give God all the Glory.



LETTER IV.

My dear Brother,

WHILST I am beholding the innumerable Objects that I am encircled with, my admiring Spirit is filled with fresh Wonder and Amazement; and I find fresh Matter to employ my feeble Pen. The Rocks, these massy Rocks upon the Shore, near my Dwelling, how barren, how unfruitful, how void of Comeliness are they, not to be compared with

with those on the other Side. They are like a fruitful Field, these like a barren Heath; they like the Church of God; these like the Men of this World, Strangers to God: They are beautifully clothed, and often laugh and sing; these almost naked, and destitute of every Sort of Melody; much resembling Man in his natural Estate, void of every Excellency. It is true, that here and there I see something on these barren Rocks as green as the useful Oak; but, upon inspecting, I find it nothing more than a little Ivy, and of small Value. So Men in an unconverted Estate have something in them that has the Appearance of Things that are really good, as the Condescension of one, the Humanity of another, the Liberality of a Third, &c. But if examined by that Rule, by which one Day, the solemn Day of Judgment, all Doctrines, Actions, and Persons, will be tried, will be found to have in it no more real Worth and Value than the clasping Ivy. For, however apparently good Men may seem, both to themselves and others, yet, unless the Heart be good, the Actions of such, in some Sort, must be bad. *Matt. vii. 17.*
Works

Works done before the Grace of CHRIST, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to GOD, as they spring not of Faith in JESUS CHRIST; neither do they make Men meet to receive Grace; yea, rather, for that they are not done as GOD hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin, Article XIII. of the Church. This to you is no strange Doctrine, I am persuaded, though it be so to Thousands, who falsely call themselves Members of our scriptural Church, both Ministers and People. O how is our Wine mixed with Water! Isai. i. 22. our Gold become dim, our most fine Gold changed! How have our Prophets seen a false Vision, and taught for Doctrines, not only the Traditions of Men, but the delusive Tales of Satan? Surely, Slumber is so far crept upon the Eyes of many of our dear Parents and Watchmen, that they are become totally blind, and therefore are still erring from the Truth: The Crown is fallen from our Head; wo unto us that we have sinned, Lam. v. 16.

The Hardness of these Rocks have brought to my Remembrance that Account given by the Prophet of the natural Man having a Heart of Stone. It is not a small
Matter

Matter that will break these Rocks : A Man may labour from Morning till Night, a Week, a Month, a Year, yea, Year after Year, even till the Day of his Death, and to very little Purpose, unless he knows how to take proper Methods for it. And is not this the Case in the Work of the Ministry? Some zealous, but unskilful Men there are in the World, who spend much Strength, and take much Pains, and that, perhaps, for many Years, and the End proves it to be but to very little Purpose.

These Rocks, barren as they are, have their Use in the Creation ; for there is no Blemish, or any Thing unnecessary, or superfluous in it ; though we take into its Account barren sinful Man. Holy Writ informs us, *The LORD hath made all Things for Himself ; yea, even the Wicked, for the Day of Evil*, Prov. xvi. 4. As I was viewing the Hardness of the Rock, a Sound struck my Ear, and, turning to the Place from whence it came, I saw a skilful Quarrier busy at his Work : I at once discovered it to be very laborious ; and, upon nearer Approaches unto it, and beholding of his Method, and inquiring particularly with Respect to the same, I learnt much from it : As I found it exactly

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ly to answer the Method that the LORD takes in bringing Sinners to the Knowledge of himself. *Is not my Word as a Fire, and a Hammer, that breaketh the Rock in Pieces? saith the LORD.* The very Materials that Quarriers now make use of to break the Rock in Pieces, that the Stones thereof may be the more useful, and answer a more valuable End, perhaps in raising some stately Fabrick, or ballasting some floating Vessel; so God, by the Fire and Hammer of His Word, in the Hand of skilful Ministers, is pleased to break the rocky Hearts of many Sinners; by which Means they became fit Stones to compose the spiritual Building; namely, Christ's Body the Church; and are that Ballast which prevents a floating World from being overset in a Deluge of Wrath. For though the unconverted Part of Mankind think that real Christians are the worst and bitterest Enemies that they have, and treat them as such very often; they are their real and only Friends, the LORD excepted; for the Wicked are spared for the Sake of the Righteous, *Gen. xviii. 23, &c. Jerem. v. 1.* The skilful laborious Quarrier is very emblematical of a Gospel-Minister, and his Work, in
many

many Respects; a few of which I will name. The first Work of the Quarrier, after he hath taken a Survey of the Premises, is to remove the Rubbish from the Bed of Stone, in order that the Remainder of his Work may be the more successful, that he may not use his Hammer, nor spend his Fire in vain. Likewise a skilful Minister's first Aim, is to endeavour to remove all the vast Rubbish of Ignorance that is upon his Hearers Hearts, which oftentimes is greatly accumulated through the Prejudice of Education; most People following the Way that their Fathers went, only on account of their Fathers having so walked, without ever inquiring whether it be right or wrong; they think that it is sufficient for them that they were so trained up and educated: A foolish Argument indeed! A Foundation upon which but few, yea no wise Man rests his temporal Concerns. Every Man of Understanding endeavours to improve upon the Rudiments that he first received; and especially if encouraged thereunto by Promises of great Advantage, by a Person who would undoubtedly fulfil his Engagements. Was a Person possessed of immense Treasures, and equal Faithfulness, to cause it
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to be advertised in a public News-Paper, that his Generosity was so extensive, that out of his hardly to be counted Riches, he would freely bestow upon any, however undeserving, all that their most extensive Wants could call for, supposing that they made a regular Application for the same. How many should we see becoming Suitors for it? They would many of them be solicitous to know all that they could concerning it, and take no small Pains to succeed. The Things of the World, Mens' Hearts being worldly, would naturally gravitate thereunto. But, blessed JESUS, all the Riches of thy Grace and Glory which are so freely held out in the Gospel for Sinners, base, vile, lost, dying, damned; though repeatedly proclaimed by thy Heralds, as sure to every one that will but accept them aright, as if already in the actual Possession of them, are by most Men treated with cold Contempt. Pardon, Peace, Heaven, Communion with God here, and Fellowship with Him hereafter, seem but as Trifles to many; as they evidence by an uniform Conduct. O what is the boasted Wisdom of these Men, but the most remarkable Folly? May not the Words of the
Prophet

Prophet *Jeremiah*, with great Propriety, be applied unto such? *They are altogether brutish and foolish*, Jer. x. 8. *The dull Ox knoweth his Owner, and the stupid Ass his Master's Crib*; but these Men *do not know, they do not consider*, Isai. i. 3. But to return.

The Rubbish being removed, the Quarrier goes to work with his Bit, alias Borer, and Hammer, in order to cut a Passage in the almost impenetrable Rock, that he may rend the same to Pieces. This is a Work of no small Labour, but of much Pains and Wearisomness. His Arms had need be strong, to lift and constantly apply the weighty Hammer, that his Blows may be of Use. I observed also, that it cut the more freely when frequently supplied with Water. Here, again, the Quarrier hath a Semblance to a Gospel-Minister; for as he lays his Borer or Cutter upon the Bed of Stone, and lifts the weighty Sledge, and frequently smites, that he may make an Incision there; so a Gospel-Minister endeavours to lay God's severe Judgments, denounced against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness of Men, upon the stony Hearts of his Hearers, and lifts the ponderous
 Hammer

Hammer of God's Law, and smites therewith, if possible, to make a Passage in the same: and sweetly is it done, when the LORD graciously supplies the Water of his Spirit. But *who is sufficient for these Things?* was once the Inquiry of an inspired Apostle; to which I answer, None but those who are made strong by the mighty God of *Jacob*. For however natural Parts, and human Acquirements, may make a Minister shine in the Eyes of Men, there is not any Thing that will make him serviceable in the Church of CHRIST, short of Divine Aid.

The Passage being cut by the Quarrier, Materials for the Explosion are put in; first the Powder, and then some Earth strongly rammed down upon it, and only a small Vacuum § preserved to put in Prime, to convey the Fire to the larger Body of Powder, which, being kindled, bursts the Rock in Pieces: So Gospel-Ministers, when, as they apprehend, they have been enabled to open a Passage into
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§ This is done by a Wire made somewhat taper, which, by the Quarrier, is rubbed with Grease, and put into the Hole upon the first Gunpowder, and the Dirt is drove down by its Side, so that when the Hole is full the Wire is pulled out.

the stony Heart, they endeavour to charge it with the Promises of the Gospel; and, if I may be allowed the Expression, ram them down with the Faithfulness of God to perform them; these being touched by the Fire of a Redeemer's Love, the Heart is rent asunder, and becomes such a Heart as God will not contemn; *for a broken and a contrite Heart the LORD will not despise.* The Quarrier, upon beholding his desired End answered, thinks nothing of all his Trouble, but views the shattered Rock with Satisfaction: Even so every faithful Minister of the LORD JESUS, tho' he hath laboured in Season and out of Season; though in the Course of his Labours he hath been made Partaker of Shame, Poverty, and Reproach, thinks it all a mere Nothing when he can, upon Gospel Principles, be satisfied that Sinners Hearts are broken under the mighty Hand of God.

This Quarrying-Work is frequently attended with imminent Danger, either by their falling from the Cliff, or by having some of the Stones fall upon them; sometimes Limbs are broke: Once I remember to have seen a Man's Life lost at it: So they that are real Ministers of the Gospel

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† The Author, a little before this Time, had purchased a Piece of Ground at *Bristol* for the Interment of the Poor, on Purpose to ease their Expences; and for which he was then much threatened to be put in the Bishop's Court, &c.

Men, O give me suffering Grace for suffering Times!

Being thus instructed by the Quarrier and his Work, I removed my Situation some small Distance, to a Bower, the Seat of which I cut out of the Side of a Hill: Its Covering is of Woodbine, Hæfel, and Thorn; and, though they are distinct Shrubs, they all Three united in making me a delightful Shade, and skreened me from the piercing Heat of the Sun. This brought to my Remembrance a Triune God; and how, under his Shade, my Soul is skreened from the scorching Temptations of the fiery Serpent.

To this Place, on Purpose for Amusement, have I frequently retired; and whilst therein, my Thoughts have travelled into Worlds unknown; neither Sea nor Land have been sufficient to bound my Thoughts: Distant Kingdoms, States, and Empires, hath my Imagination run through: And supposing that the Inhabitants of them were much like ourselves, saw that the Whole was a busy Nothing, and worse than so, and that all will soon pass away, and be gone.

Here I met with Aid to assist my roaming Thoughts, in beholding the many
stately

stately Ships that passed up and down to and from the City of *Bristol*; as also to and from distant Parts of the Universe: I often admired these floating Habitations; and more than once have they been Instrumental in bringing to my Mind that Vessel which once was a Dwelling-Place for all the Men and Women, Beasts and Birds, and other Creatures, that were in the World; and how foolish the Builder of it seemed to all around him, during the Time of his preparing thereof. I apprehend that he frequently told many of the Lookers-on of what God was about to do, (for he is said to have been a *Preacher of Righteousness* 2 *Peter* ii. 5.) And I have too much Reason to apprehend that his Sermons were, by many, treated as Gospel-Sermons are, by Multitudes, in this Day, idle Tales. I suppose, that many of the then polite Butterfly Persons in the World, made the old Dotard, as they then thought him, the Subject of their Drollery, and frequently cried, "Where is *Noah's Flood*; to provide against which, "he has been so long preparing the Ark?" And I have not the least Shadow of Doubt, but many of them, as often they beheld it, viewed it only as the Effects

of a delirious Brain, and therefore were resolved not to be warned, but to pursue their accustomed Ways of sensual Pleasure and Delight, and persisted therein *until the Flood came and swept them from the Face of the Earth.* I cannot help thinking how it was with these poor thoughtless Mortals in the Day that *Noah* and his Family entered the Ark, and God shut them in; when the Almighty unsealed all the Fountains of the great Deep, and threw open the Flood-Gates of Heaven: Surely then many a Heart failed, many a Face gathered Paleness, many a Knee smote together, and bitter Lamentations were heard amongst them. There can be no Question, but in that Day many viewed the *swimming Tabernacle* with a wishful Heart, and would have been glad of a Place therein. O! How did every Hour's Rain increase their Sorrow, every Degree of the Water's Rise augment their Pain, till at length the Floods reached their Dwellings! Methinks I see them in the utmost Confusion, running up and down, if possible, to escape its Reach; the Young and Strong flying with the utmost Swiftness; the Old and Weak hurrying after as fast as Age and Infirmary would let them; each

each looking out for Places of the greatest Eminence, hoping there to find some Safety.

In this dreadful Flight, doubtless, many Persons forgot their tender Babes (though their Infant-Cries pursued them;) whilst others cried and wept over their dear Offspring, and chose much rather to take a watry Grave with them: Children full of Strength deserted their aged Parents, thinking it much the wisest Way to make what Speed they could to save themselves: Husbands and Wives, the Darling of each other's Hearts, now became Strangers one unto another, each pursuing the Way thought best, if possible, to prevent perishing in the Water. And thus horrid Confusion covered the Face of the Earth, each Individual striving to save its Life, but all in vain; the Floods overwhelming them in their hoped-for Escape. Some ascending the highest Trees, still saw the Waters pursue them, till, at length, to the Top they ventured, when the running Streams bowed the Trees to the swelling Waves; at length, overpowered, they sunk down and died: Others, on the neighbouring highest Hills, stood weeping, expecting soon to share in the

Calamity. The Flood marched swiftly after them : Thus they beheld their Pursuer, but could retreat no further, being inclosed on every Side by that which was soon to put a Period to their Days. At length their trembling Feet were reached by the Water, then upwards to the Knees, never stopping till it mingled them with their Fellow-mortals : And thus was God avenged of his Enemies !

Thus thinking of the Flood, and the Ark, that God had appointed for the Preservation of *Noah* and his Family, I thought that the Ark bore a strong Resemblance to the Church of CHRIST ; as there was but one Ark, so there can be but one true Church ; therefore the Spouse in the *Canticles* says thus, *My Dove is but One*, *Cant. vi. 9*. But as in the Ark there were many Rooms, so in the Church of CHRIST there are many Congregations. I suppose that the Rooms in the Ark were not exactly alike as to Form ; and yet each was a Part of the Whole : So there are many Congregations that do not exactly tally with each other, nor with a National Constitution ; and yet are, notwithstanding, a Part of the One Church. Again, the Ark was to be of a certain Length, Breadth,

Breadth, and Height; *Noah* was not to exceed the Dimensions that God gave to him; neither was he to alter its Form, either for Beauty or Convenience. And so the Church of the LORD JESUS is not left in a precarious Estate, concerning its Dimensions; nor to the Humour of Mortals, respecting its Form or Beauty; but is all settled agreeable unto the Purpose of Him, *who worketh all Things, according to the Counsel of His own Will.* And as there was but one Window to give Light into the Ark, so there is but one Medium, by which the Church of CHRIST receives Light; namely, The Spirit of God; for the Word, Ordinances and Ministry, are all dark, unless illuminated by the Holy Ghost. And as there was but one Door, by which all was to enter into the Ark that did enter; neither is there any more than one Way by which we can enter into the Church of CHRIST; which is Faith, even that Faith which is of the Operation of the Spirit of God. For he that believeth not, cannot be properly said to be a Member of the Body of CHRIST, which is his Church †. The Ark had lower,

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Second

† The visible Church of CHRIST is a Congregation of Faithful (or Believing) Men, &c. Article XIX. of the Church of England.

Second and Third, or upper Stories ; so may the Church of the Redeemer be considered ; as for Instance, the Believers in a promised *Messiah* in the Antediluvian World, as the Lower. The Believers from the Flood to CHRIST's Manifestation, or the Gospel Dispensation, as the Second. And all Believers, from that Commencement to the Close of Time, as the Third or upper Story ; or CHRIST, the Foundation or lower Story ; Prophets and Apostles the Second ; and ordinary Believers, in every Age of the World, the Third or upper Story : Or the Elect of God in a state of Nature, shadowed out by the lower Part of the Ark ; that Story being invisible, as it was under Water. The same Persons called by Grace, and therefore raised out of their former Obscurity, and become conspicuous, the second Story. The same Persons, still well-nigh ripened for Glory, the Third or upper Story : Or, lastly, as St *John* expresseth it, *Little Children, Young Men, and Fathers*.

The Ark was erected by a Variety of Persons, a great Number being employed in one Branch or other belonging thereunto ; but all of them under the Direction and Assistance of *Noah*, as he received the

exact

exact Pattern from God : So the Church of CHRIST is raised up and built by the Assistance of many Men, under the Direction and with the Assistance of JESUS; according unto the Will of his Father; for He came *not to do his own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Him.* I doubt not but many that were appointed to assist in the Building received large Wages; and probably some of them sneered both at their Employer and Employment, not caring how little they did for what they received; and what they did do, in the Deluge, availed others, and themselves perished. And, without mincing the Matter, this is the Case with some appointed to survey and build the Church, and who are amply rewarded for the same: For do we not read, that at the last Day, some shall say, *Have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name cast out Devils; and in Thy Name done many marvelous Works?* Unto whom the LORD will say, *Depart from Me, ye workers of Iniquity.*

The Ark was a considerable Space in Building; and so is the Church: The first Foundation Stone was laid in Eternity, and it will not be finished until all the

Sons and Daughters of God are brought Home; then, and not till then, will the Lamb's Wife be quite ready *. The Ark, you know, floated in the Water for a Time, even until God had answered the Purpose of His Will; so the Church of CHRIST is tossed up and down in this World, which is often in Scripture compared to troubled Waters, until God shall have fulfilled all the Counsel of His Will concerning her. As a Part of the Ark was under the Water in the thick and muddy Stream, and Part of it above in the clear and open Air, so the Members of the Church are partly carnal and corrupt, and partly spiritual and pure. And, as the swelling Waves of the thick and muddy Liquid often beat upon that Part of the Ark that it could not cover; so the carnal Mind often beats against the spiritual Mind in God's Children, but shall never be able to overwhelm it. If a Person could have been a Spectator, and seen the Waves, and beheld their yawning Mouths, he would have been ready to have thought, frequently, that the rolling Vessel would soon have been swallowed up; nevertheless we read that God preserved it. So the Billows of Ungodliness, whose

* The Church triumphant, *Rev.* xxi. 9.

whose Mouths are seldom long shut against the Heritage of the LORD; but, on the Contrary, foam and roar against them, as if they would overwhelm and drown them: But this cannot be; for the Church's Safety, all the Powers of Earth and Hell cannot prevent.

The Ark, you know, after all its Vicissitudes, was brought to rest upon Mount *Ararat*, "the Curse of Trembling:" The Church hath been often made to tremble; yea, each Plank of her, for fear of the Fury of a fiery Law, which curseth every one that continueth not in the Discharge of all Things written therein. But a Time will come, when the Law shall have lost all its Force as to them; yea, it shall be a Basis for them to rest upon: For how true is it, that the same Law and Justice which condemns the Fearful and Unbelieving, supports and upholds all true Believers; and that it will so do through eternal Ages?

Various other Thoughts have occurred upon beholding the great Number of Ships, and other Craft, which pass and repass almost every Tide; some of which Thoughts I here send you; but few, if any, of these Ships go out without hav-

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ing every Thing with them they think needful for their Voyage : Some of them are beautifully adorned, no Cost is spared for curious Paint to be their Outside Covering ; their towering Masts stand high ; and, when a favourable Gale rises, their Canvass Wings are loosed to convey them safe, with their rich Merchandizes, to distant Shores : But some of them, before they reach the intended Port, meet with such tempestuous Seas as throw them on some dangerous Rock, and tear them all in Pieces ; and sometimes every Mariner perisheth. At other Times the Almighty has commanded a Boat, or Plank, Part of the wrecked Ship, to do what the Ship no longer could, namely, save a Mariner's Life. Thus, *those that go down to the Sea in Ships, see the Wonders of the LORD in the great Deep*, Psal. cvii. 23, 24. Others get safe to the Haven were they would be. When I have seen these Vessels in their Return, how unlike to the same when fitted out ; then every Part looked gay and sprightly, now meager and decaying ; yea, many of them looked as if there had been a desolating War betwixt them and the Ocean ; nevertheless, at their Return
are

are much richer, and there is much more Joy than at first setting out. Those Vessels, I thought, bore a great Likeness to Persons setting out for Heaven, in the visible Church of God, hardly one but what thinks he has Materials enough to carry him safe to Glory: And some lift up their Heads vastly high, and loosen every Sail to hasten them forward; but many are cast upon either the Rock of Pride or Presumption, and dashed in Pieces; and here and there one gets safe to Heaven: For *narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there are that find it.* And even those, in general, are much like the Ship returning from its Voyage, having gone through many a Storm in Life, and therefore much Weather-beaten; nevertheless, much richer than when they first set Sail for Glory. I have had the blessed Opportunity of seeing some of those just entering in to the eternal Port of Felicity: O how rich have their Freight been! The whole Bark has had little less than *the Mind that was in CHRIST JESUS.* I have, as it were, smelled their spicy Lading, whilst they have been breathing out their Souls to God. I have many a Time been ready to wish that

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God would permit me to pass the Gulph with them ; and, I suppose, that had it been best for me, I should have so done. O what Joy! when such a Spirit enters on its eternal Rest, both by the Angel-Bands, its Guardians, and by itself ; being for ever delivered from all its Evils, and indulged with the Favour of basking in the Beams of eternal Love.

The Business of the Day forbids me, at this Time, to add any more ; but I promise soon to resume the Subject.

Adieu.



L E T T E R V.

My dear Brother,

I Find, by Experience, that a Change of Employment to me is often a sufficient Relaxation. Man, in his most heavenly State, was never intended to be idle ; so I read, *Gen. ii. 15.* That Time hangs most heavy upon me, in which I have little or nothing to do : I have been endeavouring to dispense the Gospel of a crucified

JESUS

JESUS to a few immortal Spirits; the Issue of it I leave with GOD. That Work being at an End for this Day, with Delight I take my Pen in Hand to prosecute and carry on what in my last I promised. My Meditation was led from the Ship to the Ship's Owner, and such as work her. If we enter the Merchant's Accompting-House, and view his Oeconomy, how regular are all his Affairs? (he rightly judging, that without it, the Consequence must be fatal;) Every Clerk has his proper Employment, and every Book its proper Reference: Follow the Mercantile Man to the Exchange; how earnest are all his Inquiries! Which is the best Market, and what Commodity will answer best at that Market! And, when known by him, with what Alacrity does he more than catch the Opportunity to embrace and improve it! How doth he herein shame most Professors, great Part of whom never inspect their Accounts with God at all; and many others do it in so superficial a Manner, as never rightly to know how it stands with them, though it is an Affair of eternal Importance; but few are careful to know where is the best Ministry, the most precious Gospel-Truths
for

for their Souls ; and of those who have sought them out, how few are there that even endeavour to make the best Advantage of them, though to be had *without Money, and without Price* ? Isai. lv. 1. Well might our LORD say, that *the Children of this World are wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light.*

If we inquire after the skilful Marri-ner, we shall find him to be a Man of little Fear, whilst he passeth over the wa-try Deep. The Sun, the Moon, the Stars, become, in a great Measure, his Directors ; yea, many a Land which, if cast thereon, would destroy him, is in a Measure helpful to point out his Course, together with the Compass he is enabled to steer to a Kingdom ; yea, to a particular Port, though never there before. This Man resembles the most experienced Traveller to *Zion*, for as he passeth over the Deep of this World, but few Fears attend him : Swelling Waves, rushing Winds, as well as stark Calms, and gentle leading Breezes, are what he has often experienced in the former Course of his Passage. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, the greater or lesser Lights of God's Countenance ; yea, the Trials and Temptations
that

that he meets with from the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, are so many Helps to him to steer his Course by, together with his Bible, which is both his Chart and Compass : He is at last brought to a Land, yea, a Port, that he never saw before, to Heaven itself, the *New Jerusalem*, the City of the Great King, the Place where God in all his Glory dwells. As to the inferior Seaman, his Employment in Life exposeth him unto many Hardships, occasioned in Part by the falling Rain, the stony Hail, the fleecy Snow ; as also the impetuous Winds, and troubled Ocean. I doubt not but he is frequently like a Man at his Wits End, while Storms and Tempests roll around him ; but when he sets his Foot upon the calm Shore, all is forgotten by him ; and of all human Creatures that ever I saw, none seem so irrational whilst in this Situation ; and, by-and-by, he returns to his Employment again, and so spendeth all his Days. This Man is much like the Person who spends his Time in Sinning and Repenting, and Sinning again ; practising either Drunkenness, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleaness, &c. while Convictions, like Storms and Tempests, roll around him ;

him ; and if a violent Disease lay hold of him, and death stares him in the Face, he is horribly afraid and terrified ; but if God suspends them for a Time, all is forgotten by him, he returns to his former Practices, as the Dog to his Vomit ; and, in this Manner ends his Days, and goes down to the Grave in Sorrow, and to be no more seen.

But to return to the former Subject : Several Times when I have been in my before-named Bower, I remember to have seen some of the Effects of the Wind and Tide opposing each other ; at some of which Times several small Vessels have been turning against the former : I have looked with much Pleasure upon the Industry and Care of those that worked them ; at that Time every Hand on board appeared to have his Station, either to let go or brace each Sail, as Need required. O how did the Man at the Helm look out with the keenest Eye, lest he should run his Bark on Shore ; and, by that Means, lose his Tide, if not over-set her ! and in some Tides, when there have been many Vessels, as is frequently the Case, how did each Helms-Man seem to exert his utmost Skill to prevent striking,

ing, to each other's Damage. A noble Spirit I once was a Witness to; the Man at an Helm chose rather to hazard some small Damage to himself, by running his Vessel plump ashore, (it is true, it was upon a flowing Tide) than to run foul of, and hurt one much weaker than his own; but if, after all possible Care, one Vessel has struck another, what Discontent have the Crew of each shewed. What a Lesson is here for Christians to learn, who are all steering the same Course, bound to the same Port, and oftentimes equally opposed by contrary Winds of Temptations. Surely each Member, in every different Congregation, ought to be employed to catch every Help that God affords to carry on the Whole: And Ministers, especially, who are by Providence placed at the Helm, ought to have their Eye single, and to keep a good Look-out upon their own Actions, lest, through any Misconduct of theirs, their People's spiritual Passage, or their whole Congregation be overset. How careful ought such to be, lest one Congregation become a Hurt unto the other. O that they would but learn rather to suffer some small Damage themselves, than in any Measure,

Measure to hurt their weak Brethren. But if, after all, it should so happen, I think that it ought to be Matter of Sorrow; and not, as is too often the Case, to the great Scandal of such be it spoken, a Cause of Joy.

Though our River is not very broad, yet, sometimes, it is very tempestuous; at which Seasons the very small Boats, though without a Tongue, have been my Instructors; for, notwithstanding the Waves at such Times lift up their Heads, one quickly after another, as if determined to stop their Passage, it hath been in vain; for, by the Strength of the Watermen, (who constantly plied their Oars) and the Skill of him that steered, each have forced their Way, and arrived at the intended Place. May not each small Boat, in some Measure, be compared to a single Christian; and the swelling Waves that meet her, one close upon the other, to the constant Trials his Soul is exercised with? And Faith and Hope, to the Watermen; for, by these Graces, it is, through the Power and Strength of of Him that Pilot's *Israel*, the Christian is enabled to go through the most opposing
Trials

Trials he meets with in his Way to the Kingdom of Felicity.

At other Times, the River is calm and serene; and every Vessel, small and great, sweetly glide along. At these Seasons the Fishermen come down with their Nets and sweep the River. With much Pleasure I have beheld them let down their Nets, with a Design and Desire to entangle the Inhabitants of the Water. I have likewise marked their Care in drawing in their Nets, and observed their watchful Eyes, looking to see what they have dragged to their Boat; and how careful they have been in preserving the Fish; and equally so to throw away that which was nothing worth. I have likewise remarked, that one Fisherman has followed close after another, and swept the same Place, and each have caught some Fish; nay, it hath sometimes so happened, that he who followed caught the most. Gospel-Ministers are said to be Fishers of Men, and in their Labours, there is some Correspondence with the Fishermen mentioned: The Ministers of Jesus, many of them, are passing up and down this Kingdom, especially; and, with much Pain and
 Trouble,

Trouble, let down the Net of the Gospel, with an earnest Desire to entangle the Inhabitants of the Earth. How do they watch, as with an hundred Eyes, to see who appears to be laid hold of under their Sermons? And with what Assiduity do they strive to separate between the Precious and the Vile? well-knowing that the latter are an Incumbrance; and, in some Measure, an Hinderance to the former. And, frequently, as the Fishermen who came last have caught the most Fish, so it is often the Case in the Work of the Ministry, for the LORD will send *by whom he will*, and it is daring Impiety to find Fault with his Conduct.

Other Observations have I made upon the River itself: It is exceeding crooked, and very dirty; its ebbing and flowing, at its Spring or Neap Tides, is swifter or slower; sometimes it is very rough, and, at other Times, it wears a smoother Face; always inconstant, and never at one Stay. An exact Likeness of the present World; its Ways being crooked and filthy; and sometimes the rapid Stream of Corruption drives furiously on; at other Times more slow, but always changing; for not the World only will pass away, but even
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the very Fashion of it doth every Day vary. How unfit then for an immortal Spirit's Rest? Deluded Creatures! sure they are, who make it their only Happiness; and many there be who do so. I think it a great Blessing in Providence, that the Tides are so ordered, as that it is High-Water twice in little more than twenty-four Hours; inasmuch, that it not only gives those, who travel by them, frequent Opportunity of doing Business; but also, its so doing stocks our Markets, and spreads our Tables with many Things that are both pleasing and profitable to Nature; as its Flux and Reflux are so constant, Persons, who are not ready by one Tide, often are abundantly so by the next. The Vessel that cannot reach our Quay by one High-Water, perhaps by the next, or before, can so do, with a valuable Cargo of a perishing Nature. On the Contrary, if High-Water was but once a Year, or Month, what a Stagnation to Trade; what a Hurry and Confusion it must make; and oftentimes what Scarcity and Want would it occasion in many Places? Likewise what a Number of the finny Multitude, that inhabit the vast Deep, which now are wonderfully serviceable,

able, would be rendered nothing worth. O LORD! hast Thou thus provided for the common Affairs of Life, and the constant temporal Wants of Mortals; and art thou less careful for their Spiritual and Eternal Concerns? By no Means: For thy Word, thy blessed Word, the Word of Life, which is able to save the Soul, through the Power of the Holy Ghost, is preached in many Places oftener than Twice in twenty-four Hours; so that Persons who are prevented, even by lawful Things, at one Hour, may be disengaged at the next Opportunity; by which Means that Petition may be answered, "Give us, Day by Day, our daily Bread."

During my Stay in the friendly Arbour, I thought upon some Excursions which I had formerly made down the River, into an Arm of the Sea, generally called *Kingsroad*; though in old Sea-Charts, called the *Severn-Sea*; the *Severn* emptying herself therein. The different Things that I have seen there, have been of Use to me: Sometimes it seemed as if God had closed His Hand, and bound the Winds up in His Fist; so that the whole Breadth, about seven Miles, appeared as smooth as a well-rolled Bowling-green; not a Dimple in its Counte-

Countenance; many Vessels at a Time have I seen there riding at Anchor, and frequently been on board several of them, as well Ships of War as Merchant-men; most of which, especially Ships of War, seemed to be a floating Hell, if we can form an Idea of the Wickedness and Blasphemy that there is in the Shades of Darkness. In each of those Ships, both Officers and Men, cursing and swearing like so many Fiends, carefully trained up by that compleat Master of all Iniquity, Satan. I then wondered that the LORD did not open the Mouth of the great Deep, and swallow them up. At other Times I have been there when the Almighty seemed to throw abroad his Fingers, and loose the Winds out of his Fist, so that the Waters held in the Hollow of his Hand were troubled. Then did one Wave lift itself up against another; and, with an impetuous Surge, did they frequently meet and dash each other in Pieces, as if their Rage knew no Bounds, though God hath set a Boundary thereunto. For to the Sea He hath said, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed.* At one of these boisterous Times, whilst at an Anchor in a large

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Vessel,

Vessel, called a *Trow*, half-decked, I saw Part of the Top-Sail of another that was overfet as she was driving down, and some, or all of her Men rowing in a small Boat to reach the Shore. A Sloop I likewise saw, at the same Time, that seemingly weathered it well; but as she was turning into the River *Avon*, to go up to *Bristol*, down she sunk to the Bottom. When the Tide came, we weighed Anchor, loosed our Sails, and proceeded on our Passage; we had not sailed far, before the LORD seemed angry with us; and, I believe, that one and all on board (upwards of forty Persons) thought we should have had a watery Grave; the Heavens gathered Blackness, the driving Hail pursued us, and God brought the Winds out of his Treasures much stronger than before. Every Man belonging to the Vessel had his Station; one of them was drunk, through the Liberality of the Passengers, and his own Covetousness of Liquor, which had well-nigh cost us our Lives; for, when bid, let go a Brace in his Hand, he hawled it much the closer; this filled her Main sail the fuller, and gave her such a Heel as well-nigh to overfet her; the Bulge - Water overflowed her Ciel-

ing;

ing ; the Passengers in general supposing it to have been the Sea pouring in, were sorely terrified. The Cries and Lamentations that pierced my Ears, I cannot now describe ; and whilst any Appearance of Danger lasted, they did what some People call (though falsely) *pray* heartily unto God ; but, when the Danger was at an End, they appeared totally forgetful of their Deliverer, and their Deliverance ; and closed their Passage, many of them, with the Day, in Singing idle Songs. At another Time, crossing at a noted Passage, called *Aust*, at the Mouth of the *Severn*, we had so brisk a Gale, that it broke the Mast, (as thick as a middling Man's Body) and carried the same, with Sails and Tackle, over-board : I then thought that I should sleep in the noisy Billows, and never alive reach the friendly Shore. I could, in Peace, commit my Spirit into His Hand who had redeemed it. The Wickedness of the Boatmen, at that Time, was very great ; and, when I spoke mildly to them concerning the same, they swore so much the more : I then desisted, and left them to their own Master ; and, in about two

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Hours,

Hours, the LORD brought us safe to Land.

It is true, that many Disasters happened in the Course of our Navigation; but, alas! What would this World have been without it? How contracted would each Island have been? Without it, how little would it have known of the great and mighty Works of GOD? And, above all, How dark must a great Part of the Globe have remained, even unto the last Period of Time, if the LORD had never taught Men *to go down to the Sea in Ships*? The Gospel of a blessed JESUS could never have been conveyed, as it now is, to the remotest Parts of the Earth: For, though an Angel from Heaven had been sent to have told what was done at *Jerusalem*, respecting the Birth, Life, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of the Holy JESUS, we could not have had that Evidence of the Fact that we now have. For Satan sometimes transforms himself into the Likeness of an Angel of Light; consequently, there would have been some Room for Suspicion: Besides, none so fit to convey the blessed Intelligence, as those who were interested in the same,
Men,

Men, for whom He lived and died; and such are his Witnesses, who not only conversed with Him *before*, but *in* His Sufferings; were Evidences of His Passion, eat and drank with Him after He rose from the Dead, and saw Him taken up into Heaven. By the Instrumentality then of Ships, have these gracious Benefits been spread far and wide.

Reflecting upon these Things, I was led to praise G o d both for the Sea and Shipping, as they collectively are the Instruments of many Blessings: By them the Wants of many of our Fellow-Creatures are continually supplied, and an Intimacy opened betwixt Fellow-Mortals that never otherwise could have been; and each Land made to possess the most valuable Produce of the Whole. When I have read the History of our Kingdom, and the pagan Darknes it was once in, and ruminated upon the many Evils, Temporal and Spiritual, that attended it; I could not, but with Emotion of Soul, think how dreadful would my Lot have been, was it not for Navigation. How dark and confused must my Ideas have been of a God; what savage Brutality should I not only have allowed myself in,

but also thought, that in so doing, I was pleasing the Almighty Spirit; yea, what Acts of Cruelty should I have perpetrated, with the Idea of its being acceptable to the Supreme Being? But these dark and diabolical Conceptions are scattered by the Rays of the Gospel. Blessed God! Blessed Providence! After it had made an immense Ocean, which separated many Parts of the dry Land, it taught Men to make floating Vehicles, and in them to steer to this Island, one after another; and at length, in one of them, to convey the happy Tidings of redeeming Grace. With Pleasure I think upon the Bark that plowed the Ocean with it, and the Zeal for God, and Love to Souls, of him who first engaged in bringing hither that precious Treasure. What different Workings of Soul he probably had, before he delivered the heavenly Embassy; sometimes hoping, sometimes fearing, when on his Voyage in rough tempestuous Weather, if such he met with; who knows which was most prevalent, his Faith or Fear, when he first landed? Who can possibly describe his Emotion of Soul about his Success, especially when he surveyed his fierce-looking almost human

man Fiends congregated together? And the Heart-felt Joy which warmed his benevolent Soul, when he saw the glad Tidings embraced by them? O how does his active Zeal and Affection fill me with Blushing, on account of my Indifference in so good and so glorious a Work. I am fully satisfied, that even in this Day, though we are called *Christians*, the far greatest Part of us are but baptized Heathens: And yet how small and poor my Labours towards spreading the Excellency of my LORD! O what is preaching five Times every Sabbath, and five Times more in the Week besides*? LORD JESUS, give me such a Love unto Thee, that I may spend and be spent for Thee; let my few Days be all employed in endeavouring, through Thy Grace, as an Instrument in Thy Hand, to convince and convert many of my Fellow-Sinners. In the Course of this Letter I have, as you will recollect,

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* If any Person is desirous to know what is my Gain for so doing? I answer, From an ill-natured World, Shame and Contempt: From them that hear me, Thanks and Blessing: From my own Heart, Approbation of discharging my Duty: From God, Strength for the Work, and that Satisfaction which worldly Minds are totally unacquainted with.

lect, mentioned the horrible Impiety that I have heard on board Ships of War, and that I was amazed that the LORD did not destroy the Perpetrators of the same; but my Wonder hath since ceased: I am fully satisfied that God Almighty useth these unhappy Men to bring about his own Purposes; not only to pull down one from a Throne, and set up another, *For by Him Kings reign*; but also to be a Defence to his Church and People; for *the Earth oftentimes is constrained to help the Woman*. But, LORD, how miserable is the State of these unhappy Men? How many of them, in an unthinking Moment, are hurried into a boundless Eternity, perhaps by a Ball from a Cannon, whose Voice differs not much from Thunder, or from a Musket-Shot, equally destructive, though delivered in a somewhat softer Sound; or, it may be, a keen Hanger draws every drop of Blood, and leaves the Seaman weltering in his Gore, and sends his Soul to the righteous Bar of GOD to receive her Doom. O LORD, when shall their Impiety be lessened, who thus jeopard their Lives? When will the Time come, that the Nations shall learn War no more? O GOD, hasten that Day,
when

when Judah shall no more vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim Judah; when the Kingdoms of this World, shall be the Kingdoms of our G O D, and of His CHRIST.

I remember to have been several Times in *Kingsroad*, on board Ships, when waiting for a fair Wind; and how eager have been the Desires of the Mariners for the same; Wish after Wish has dropped from their Mouths for it in Abundance; but I do not remember ever to have heard, from any of them, one Desire after Heaven. I was once there during the last War, at which Time a Man of War lay there to convoy the Ships ready for sailing. The Wind shifted, and became fair to put to Sea; and she gave Signal for the same: How did the Crews of the different Merchant-Ships (supposing the others to be like-minded to the Crew of the Ship that I was then on board of) rejoice? What Industry did they discover in loosening their Sails, and in weighing their Anchors, that they might have the Benefit of her Protection? It was a Pleasure then to the whole Ship's Company that their Navigator was on board. A small Thing or two wanting, to make the Voyage more agreeable,

were not waited for; lest, by so doing, they should fall into an Enemy's Hand, Upon this I thought, LORD, if these Men are so desirous to see the Port that they are bound to, which, when reached, makes them no more happy than before; how ought I to long and pant for the Haven of eternal Rest and Felicity? Especially as it is my Home, the Place where my Father dwells, and where JESUS, my elder Brother, who hath purchased me with His Blood, reigns before his Ancients gloriously; and in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy; Sorrow being no more; Sicknes and Pain being at an End; Tears being all wiped away; and Sin, the Source of all Affliction, being for ever, O blessed News! at an End. If the Crew of each Ship is industrious to heave up its Anchor, and loosen its Sails, when the Wind serves, and proceed forward with their Convoy; if it is a Pleasure and Satisfaction to have their Navigator on board at such a Time; if they will not suffer small Things to detain them, lest they fall a Prey to their Enemies; how industrious should every Congregation of God's People be to loosen from the World, and the Things of Sense,

Sense, as they have always the enlivening Breezes of God's Spirit, though not at all Times in equal Strength, to help them forward? How ought they to loosen their Sails of Prayer, to catch every Breath of God to hasten them on in their Passage, under their Convoy the LORD JESUS? For it is He that *leadeth Joseph*, Psalm lxxx. 1. for only He is *the Shepherd of Israel*. I am sure it is Matter of great Thankfulness, and it ought to be a Work of Praise, that they have an experienced Spiritual Minister to steer their Course: Under such Helps, they are likely not only to escape the Hand of the common Enemy, but also to avoid the Rocks and Sands of spiritual Pride and Despair, that are in their Way.

I shall close this Letter with the few following Reflections: The Vessel that was overfet, and whose Men, either in Whole or Part, I saw rowing for Life in the Boat, carried a very high Mast and large Sails, though her Hull was very shallow; which, very probably, was the Cause of her being the sooner overfet. So some professing Churches lift themselves up on high, and spread themselves abroad, as if no Gale would hurt them; but have
fatally

fatally proved, that the first severe Gust of Persecution hath quite overturned them: Nevertheless, such of their Members as are truly gracious, and have been enabled to row and toil, when escaped to a lesser and more obscure Church, are sure to get safe to the heavenly Shore.

Again, some Churches there have been who have stood the Storm much longer, and seemed to bear the boisterous Season well; nevertheless, at length have proved to be rotten in the Bottom, and sunk like Lead in the Sea.

As to the real Churches of the Saviour, they share in the Storms of Persecution equally, and generally more, than formal ones; yet they weather the Storm: But in these there are some Persons of very little Faith; some without any Faith at all: And such Persons, in Times of Trouble, appear to be most affected; and when the LORD gives a gracious Calm, are soonest to forget former Troubles and Difficulties.

Lastly, Every true Church of the Lamb will find, that, though much of Her outward Help be taken away, she will not, shall not, be wrecked. Beat up and down
in

in Distress, she may, in the swelling Waves of the Ocean, and by them be lifted up at one Time, and at another Season be, as it were, let fall very low, they sinking under her: Hard Gales of corrupt Doctrines and terrible Surges of Heresies may drive against her Sides, as if they would start every Plank in her; but all in vain, for the LORD keepeth her Night and Day, lest any do her real Hurt; and will at last bring her in to her celestial Harbour.

Once more, my dear Friend, in the LORD,

Adieu.



LETTER VI.

My dear Brother,

HOW vain a Creature is Man! If he is pleased with his own Performance, he generally supposeth that others are the same: Something of this Vanity I find cleaves to me at this Moment. I found a secret Pleasure, from Time to Time, in what I have conveyed to you upon

upon different Subjects that have arisen in my Mind concerning the Things that surround my little Hermitage, and that I have been conversant with during my last three Years Residence here. A Hermitage I may call it, from the Loneliness of its Situation ; for there is but one House in view, and that more than a Mile distant ; and that our nearest Neighbour, except one, at a Turnpike, and but little short in distance ; unless I take into the Account of Neighbourhood two poor Fellow - creatures fast asleep in Death's Arms, extended in open Air, bound fast with Iron Chains upon a Gibbet, for a Robbery and Murder : These hang nodding near my House ; and many a dark Night have I paid them a Visit unknowing, till I have heard their Vulcanian Suit of Clothes creek over my Head, occasioned by the Wind's swinging them to and fro. Their rapacious Hands now are quiet : And as from them I could receive no Damage ; so on their Account I never was afraid, however dark. For he who died but a Moment since, is as dead as *Adam* the first ; and his Spirit hath equally taken Leave of our Region.

In

In this Letter I shall entertain you with what, as near as possible, I can recollect that I observed in leaving my friendly Bower above-mentioned, and the Thoughts that occurred concerning it. As I was departing, my Eye was struck with the Sight of a large Number of Ants at my Feet: Looking at them, I saw one very busy with a deceased Friend, with which it had loaded itself, and, with Speed, was travelling on in her Journey. Several of the same Species strove to take away her Charge, and sometimes the Contest was very great. I thought it worth Observation, to see what would be done with the Deceased; I believe I was more than half an Hour waiting upon them; at last the Ant, which first had the Deceased, carried the Corps off. I traced them to the Threshold of their House, where the Living with the Dead entered, there to inter the last Remains of the breathless Insect; probably the other Ants contended only to do the same kind Office. I thought their Conduct was enough to shame many who call themselves Christian Ministers: For, though they know no Want of any Thing that this World can afford; but,

but, on the contrary, live in daily Affluence; yet will not they abate the smallest Matter of what they call their *Dues* for the Interment of a poor Person.—For I must beg Leave to inform you, that it is too true, that several poor People have been drove to the greatest Distress; yea, even to pawn or sell their Clothes, in cold Weather, to pay the cruel Tribute. How shall I relate it? How shall I discover the Nakedness of these Men, I dare not say *Brethren*: For I cannot call any Man a *Brother*, although he were in Episcopal Orders, who hath so callous a Heart. Within the Circle of my Knowledge, a poor Widow who, with her lately made Fatherless Children, were destitute of Bread, have been drove to the above Extremity. I remember once to have seen a poor Woman, whose Clothes upon her Back did not look to be worth One Shilling, earnestly begging of a Pluralist Rector, who was also Chancellor of a Diocese, and whose Income was several Hundred Pounds a Year, to forgive her his Fee for the Interment of her then dead Child; but his tender Heart could not admit her pressing Importunity to find a Place, but dismissed

missed her with the Appearance of Indignation. Surely Men of this Conduct ought to go to the Ant for Instruction, notwithstanding they pretend to be the Teachers of Mankind. If the following Words of the Prophet are applicable to any, most certainly they are to such; *They are greedy Dogs which can never have enough; they look to their own Ways, every one for his Gain from his Quarter. They feed themselves, and not the Flock.* Micah.

Surely these Priests *in Zion, not of Zion*; are a Scandal to the sacred Office; a Stumbling-block to Deists, and other Unbelievers; a dead Weight in the Church of God; a Grief to the Godly; and are justly the Scoff and Ridicule of Understanding-Men: Yea, so low are they sunk in the Esteem of their own People, of the middling and lowest Class, that they have no Regard for them. It can be no Breach of Charity to say, that the only Thing that these Men have in View, in taking the Oversight of a Flock, is filthy Lucre. May the LORD change their Minds, and cause them to remember the strict Account that they must give at the Day of Judgment, when the LORD JESUS will summon them to His Bar. I am verily

rily assured, that the principal Cause of much of the Irreligion which is amongst us at this Day, is owing to the spiritual Blindness, Ignorance, Covetousness, Immorality, and Viciousness of many in the Ministry.

Having left the generous Ant, as I was passing on Homeward, I once more cast my Eyes up to the Rocks, where I beheld a Flock of Goats feeding, and beneath a Flock of Sheep doing the same. I immediately thought, by the Names of these Animals, one Day will the LORD JESUS call all Mankind. I shall therefore, in a few Words, consider the Suitableness of the Appellations. I shall begin with the *Goats*.

In the first Place, Goats are very stubborn Creatures, and so are the Wicked; for they will, if possible, have their own Ways, though the Judgments of God stand at the Door. Goats are very stinking Creatures; so are the Ungodly; for both they and their Doings are a Stink in the Nostrils of God, and all good Men. Goats appear to have a fixed Dislike to the herding with Sheep: It is exactly the same with incorrigible Sinners. Goats frequently differ amongst themselves,
fight.

fight with, wound, and maim each other ; and so do the Men of this World : For who are those amongst the Children of Men who delight in Garments rolled in Blood, in Death, and Slaughter ? Not them who have *put on the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, but the Prophane, the Ungodly. Goats will feed upon almost any Thing ; yea, upon Briars and Thorns, while they tread better Pasture under Foot ; and so Men of corrupt Hearts will do ; even *Arianism* and *Socinianism*, or Salvation by their own Doings, will pass for Gospel with them, whilst they tread the true Gospel under Foot. Again, Goats are many of them very mischievous ; so are many of the Unconverted, as completely so, as if they had been trained up in Hell. Lastly, Goats, from what I see, choose to make dangerous Places their Dwelling, from which I have known some of them to fall and be dashed in Pieces. It is the same with the Wicked ; for nothing can be more dangerous than allowedly to live in Sin and Folly : And this many do, till they fall down at last, and are dashed in Pieces for ever.

My Observations on the *Sheep* are as follow : They are meek and gentle ; so
are

are the Children of God; having learnt of JESUS CHRIST their Master, who hath taught them so to be, that they might *find Rest to their Souls*. Sheep, though quiet in themselves, are often disturbed: Almost every little Dog seems to take Pleasure in barking at them. And so, notwithstanding Christians are of a meek and quiet Spirit, they are frequently molested: Almost every Dog of Hell appears to take Pleasure in worrying them. Sheep can and do distinguish between good and bad Pasture; and so can the People of God between true and false Doctrine: And as Sheep will not feed upon Briars and Thorns, however green they may appear, so Christians will not receive false Doctrine, with whatever human Authority it be clothed. Sheep improve every Place where they are kept and folded; so do the Children of God wherever they reside and worship, either by Example, Prayers, Advice, &c. Sheep are not all externally alike; neither are Christians, as to Forms and Modes of Worship. Sheep are a valuable Treasure to their Owners; so God accounts Christians; for He hath purchased them with a far greater Price than Silver or Gold, even with the precious

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ous Blood of JESUS CHRIST ; and, in the decisive Day, they shall be his ; at which Time the Goats shall go into everlasting Perdition.

The Day being well-nigh at an End, and the Curtain of the Evening beginning to drop, I thought upon the long Night of Death that is invading almost all Flesh, and the Consequences that will attend it. And, good God ! what a Scene opened to my View ! Death tremendous ! What *all* must submit unto, except those that shall be upon the Earth when the LORD will appear in the Clouds, encircled with a Rainbow, *and they shall be changed in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye* : And how few think any Thing concerning it, till it treads upon their Heels ? And even of them that do think, how few are there that think as they ought ? Surely the Hour of Dissolution is a solemn Season, that cannot be exactly described by any of the Living : And many are overtaken by it in a Moment, without the least Warning ; some at a Tavern, or an Alehouse, overwhelmed with their Cups ; others at an Academy of Hell, a Playhouse ; and many in Chambering and Wantonness, revelling in their Debaucheries.

Like-

Likewise, by Water, frequently an unexpected Squall of Wind, in an Instant, lays many in a Liquid Grave; whilst Others, by a longer or shorter Illness, are confined to a Bed of Languishing; and then step into Eternity. Many Times have I visited Persons upon a dying Bed, and in different States of Soul; some behaving as seeing Him that is invisible, and longing to be dissolved, and to be at Rest; others crying for Mercy, and, I hope, from a Sense of the Need of it; others, again, crying for Fear of Hell. Some seemed stupid; and one to be entirely left of God. Not that I will dare to take upon me to determine concerning his final Estate: I only mention what passed between him, another, and myself. One of us asked him how he found himself? His Answer was, That he should die: One of us then asked him, how he thought it would be with him after Death? His Answer was, That he should be damned. He was then asked, If he did ever pray? He said, No; for, said he, there was a Time when God would have heard; but *he laughs at my Calamity, and mocks at my Fears*. He was then asked, If we should pray with him; he answered,

ed, Yes, if you please. And when Prayer was over, he was again asked, If he had any Desire to be saved? The Answer, No, no more than a Horse, or an Ox. In a few Days after he died; and I never heard of any Alteration in him before his Departure. If any one is desirous of knowing his general Character, it was as follows: He was a Man that lived, I believe, to near the Age of Forty, in all Manner of Wickedness; he then seemed to take a religious Turn, and constantly attended the Preaching of the Word of God by the People who, by Way of Reproach, are called *Methodists*: He became a close Companion of their Preachers, almost wherever they went, round *Bristol*. Exactly how long this lasted, I forget; but, I believe, not less than two or three Years; and then returned to his former Practices; and, if possible, became more wicked than before. And as this Case is singularly gloomy, so have I met with one as singularly pleasing, in a Man who, as himself confessed, fell a just Victim to the Laws of his Country: This Person's Name was *Nicolas Mooney*; he was executed at *Bristol*, April 24, 1752,
for

for a Street-Robbery. According to an Account, written by himself, and printed before his Death, he had been one of the most infamous Persons that ever existed. He had been in the Rebel Army: He had coined Money: He had committed many Robberies on the Highway: He committed Whoredom with a Woman under Sentence of Death in *Newgate*, whilst himself was under the same Judgment. And, during that a poor condemned Criminal, like themselves, lay dead by their Sides. And whilst confined for the Fact for which he suffered, till within about three Weeks of his Death, had been plotting, and contriving, and making, and vending, all the Lies that he could, to get clear; but, from the Time that the LORD overtook him, he gave strong, clear, and undeniable Proofs of a sound Conversion. When he was last arraigned, he surprized the whole Court. He pleaded Guilty. Being asked by the Judge (Sir *Michael Foster*) why he did so, and by him informed that he might put himself upon his Trial, and that Something might turn out in his Favour. He answered, I hope that I am a *Christian*: I am *Guilty*, and cannot tell a Lie to save my Life.

And,

And, as I am a living Witness to the last Moment of his earthly Existence, he appeared to be full of Faith in JESUS; full of Love to God the Father; full of Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

The following I copy from a Letter wrote by him after he had received Sentence:

“ On *Friday* Se’night I am to meet the
 “ Fate my Crimes have *justly* deserved.
 “ I deserve not only *Death*, but *Hell*. To
 “ the Former, Man hath doomed me :
 “ from the Latter, CHRIST will save me ;
 “ Of this I have such a firm Hope in my-
 “ self; (O the Riches of the Mercy of
 “ GOD in CHRIST JESUS!) that my *Prison*
 “ is a *Palace*; my *Chains* are as *Ornaments*;
 “ and I am quite *bappy*.” From these, and
 similar Instances, let us learn something
 of the Justice and Mercy of GOD : Such
 Instances are not common. And there
 is something in dying very affecting, when
 Nature is about to be wrecked, in Spite
 of all that Friends, Relations, or Physi-
 cians, can do. I have ere now seen a
 tender Wife stand weeping over her dy-
 ing Husband. O what Sorrow ran thro’
 her Soul ! What Agony and Pain did her
 outward Gesture discover that she inward-
 ly felt ? Nevertheless, being more than
 F willing

willing to be his Companion as long as Life would last, and to administer all the Help she could, she would often stretch out her ready Hand, and wipe the cold Death-Sweats from his Face; and likewise supply his almost-closed Mouth with some Moisture. Whilst their dear Children, for whom, when in Health, he laboured early and late, wet and dry, and never thought it hard, stood weeping round his Bed also; and crying to the following Purpose: “ Will cruel Death take
 “ him from us? Will he spare him no
 “ longer? O must we part? Forbid it,
 “ LORD! stop the relentless Tyrant’s
 “ Hand! O thou King of Terrors!
 “ Thou unrelenting Conqueror! —
 “ My Father, O my dear Father!” The Father’s Tongue had failed him, that he could not speak; nevertheless, being sensible, could not but bear a Part in their Grief, thus weeping and lamenting; and, beholding each other, at length his Eye-Strings burst, his Jaw dropt, his Spirit quivered upon his pale Lips; and, like a dying Taper, departed the Husband and the Father. But to die would be but trifling, was it not for Judgment, that will certainly follow: For, as *it is appointed*
unto

unto Men once to die ; so, after Death, comes the Judgment ; the Prospect of which Day does now, in some Measure, fill my Mind. How will the Thunder then roar, and the Lightening flash, from one End of Heaven unto the other ? whilst the Sun, that bright Luminary of the World, shall be darkened, and the Moon turned into Blood, and the twinkling Stars fall from the Skies, like Leaves in Autumn. At which Time a commissioned Angel shall stand forth, with one Foot upon the Earth and the other upon the Sea ; and swear by Him that liveth for ever, that *Time is no more*. Then will the Angels fold back the hanging Skies, as a Curtain, to disclose the tremendous Judge ; whilst the Elements, more fierce than Gunpowder touched by Fire, shall melt with fervent Heat ; so that the Earth shall be burnt up, with all Things that therein is. Hark ! hark ! listen to the Crack of Worlds, and the Cries of Millions of People. See, see ! how the rolling Streams of melted Sulphur, more destructive than Water, even consuming Fire, runs, and meets, at every Quarter, to fulfil the Will of God ; till all his Work is done.

Things being thus prepared, behold the Judge cometh, and, with such Pomp and Majesty, as no Tongue can fully tell! But this we are assured of, He will come with all the Glory of His Father; and, to attend Him, Thousands of Angels. O! how unlike His *first* Appearance: Then He was poor; a Companion for Beasts; despised and rejected of Men: But now, He is more than a Companion for Angels; for He gives Law even to Cherubims and Seraphims; and it is their Heaven to obey Him.

Being thus seated, and commissioned to judge the World in Righteousness, the Angels sound their Trumpets, (at once a Display of His Glory, and an Awakening of the sleeping Dead). The Voice of them will run through the World, and command the slumbering Dust of every departed human Creature to arise, and come to Judgment. What Multitudes obey the Summons! even more than the Stars of Heaven in Number, or Sands upon the Sea-shore: Graves, however vaulted, cannot keep back their Deposits; Beasts, with whom Mortals have been mingled, by their feeding on them, can
no

no longer detain their Prey; the Sea, and Fishes, which, for Generations almost unnumbered, have been the Repository of many Human Bodies, are not permitted any longer to confine them; Martyrs, who have been consumed by Fire, &c. and whose Ashes have, in Scorn, been scattered in the Air, once more have every Atom of them collected, and their Bodies rebuilt by the Great Architect of Universal Nature.

Methinks I see the swelled Yards, the common Burying-Places, swelled by the Number of Persons that have been there interred, almost lost; almost every Particle of them leaps into Life, and becomes a Part of an human Body! But with what Difference will the Dead come forth, O amazing Thought! Some, we are told, shall arise to everlasting Joy and Bliss; and some to endless *Sorrow, Shame, and Confusion of Face*. We are told, that *the Dead in CHRIST shall rise first*. With what Delight will each of these leave their Tomb, however fine and stately? Methinks I now see and hear them bidding the Graves farewell for ever, and with Joy hastening to their LORD. O what a hearty Welcome do they meet with from Him

that loved them, and redeemed them unto God by His Blood, out of every Kindred, Tongue, and Nation under Heaven ! Methinks I see Him at the Head of this blessed Army, presenting them unto His Father, with a Lo, here I am, and the Children which Thou hast given me. At which, O how will the astonished Angels gaze, whilst, at Jesus's Command, they prepare for them in Heaven, that each may take his proper Mansion, eternally designed him; which, when done, all will find Employment there; the golden Harps, which long lay dormant upon Account of their Absence, shall now be employed by them. How sweetly then will they touch every String? And the Chorus of all will be Thanksgiving unto Him who is worthy to receive Honour, and Power, and Glory, for ever and ever: For He hath redeemed us unto God by His Blood. Methinks I likewise see them following the Lamb in their rich attire, their heavenly Vestments hanging down to their Feet, whilst each of their Heads is adorned with a Crown, not of shining Stones, (at best but a Part of the Bowels of the Earth) but with the Victories of the Lamb. Thus situated and arrayed, I behold them entire Strangers to Sorrow and Pain, it all being done away. Their
once

once dewy Cheeks, and watery Eyes, (on Account of their many private, as well as public Faults ; likewise on Account of their little Love to their blessed Master,) are no longer so, *all Tears being wiped off* ; and they drink freely and plentifully of the *River of Pleasure, which flows from God's Right Hand ; the Streams of which make glad the City of God.* O more than happy, happy State ! If you and I, my dear Friend and Brother, are but permitted to share in the same, how shall we then rejoice in a Triune God, in His Purposes of Grace ; in His Plan of Salvation ; in His Distribution of Favour unto us ; in His continuing to us the same ; in a Word, in His bringing of us to Glory. It will not grieve us then, that in this Life, the Men of this World, the Men that knew not our Saviour, looked upon us with Indifference, or that they treated us with Contempt. We shall see, clearer than ever we have yet seen, the Enmity of the human Heart in its fallen Estate, and be amazed that it pursued no farther after us ; seeing that we deserted its Connections, and, through Grace, were resolved to be no more Associates with them, who are ruled and governed by it. May the dear LORD JESUS help each of us to reach
that

that blisful Port, the Haven of eternal Felicity!

O that here I was constrained to stop, there being no different Subject for my Meditation. But it is not so: I read in the Volume of Truth, that when the Saints are entered into *the Joy of their LORD*, that the Judge has other Work to do. Methinks I see the Court set, and the God of Heaven's just Record produced; wherein is the Account of every idle Word, and every secret Thought, as well as private Action, of the unrenewed Soul. Methinks I hear such a one called to the Bar! With what Reluctance doth he come forth! How does every Part of him tremble! What horrid Thrills run through his Soul! How glad would his Spirit have been, if his Dust might have had an eternal Sleep in its quiet Grave; or, being re-united, could together reel back into Death's strong Prison: But, seeing that is denied him, and he must appear, how glad if not before Him, whom, by his Sins, he pierced afresh a thousand Times, without the least Remorse or Gospel-Sorrow for it. Rather, doubtless, would he view the highest Angel in Glory sitting as his Judge, than JESUS, whose Blood he trampled under Foot, and to whose Spirit

Spirit of Grace he, when living, did despite. Methinks I hear him charged with all his Ungodliness; and see him speechless stand, without one vain Excuse: Fully satisfied now that Thousands of them twice ten Thousand Times made, will not one Jot avail: Whilst Gospel Ministers, G O D's Providence, and his own Conscience, give in strong, clear, and undeniable Evidence against him; and he is ordered to stand on the *Left Hand*, to be condemned with his Fellow-Rebels; in the Number of which, we are told, will be some who will recount their Works, Works, doubtless, by which themselves and others thought them Saints of the greatest Magnitude. LORD, (a Confession of his Power and Authority,) *we have prophesied in Thy Name*; preached Thee to a wicked and ungodly World: *And in Thy Name cast out Devils*; been successful in the Work of the Ministry, even to the turning Sinners *from Darkness to Light, from the Power of Satan unto G O D*: *And in Thy Name done many marvellous Works*; so that Multitudes have been astonished, whilst they beheld what a Reformation we wrought; and yet will not be owned by Him. What then will become of the Proud, the Covetous, the Idle, the Cursing

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ing and Swearing, the Drunken, the Debauched, the Gambling, the perjured Men in the Ministry? and of the Men who are *Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God*? And such in great Numbers there are: I say, What will become of these false Prophets? Why, with the Beast they will be *cast into the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone*. For upon all the Ungodly, however in this World dignified or distinguished by Office, the Judge will pronounce the terrible Sentence, a Sentence indeed that cannot be reversed, *Depart ye Cursed, Cursed with an everlasting Curse, from Me, and the Company of Saints and Angels, into everlasting Fire; where the Worm dieth not, and where the Fire is not quenched*. But where the *Breath of the LORD, as a Stream of Brimstone, shall feed the never-dying Flame, and the Smoke of your Torment shall ascend up for ever; prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, to be their Companion in outer Darkness, with whom in Rebellion thou hast joined against Me, thy only rightful Sovereign. Into what a wretched dismal State, and that for ever, are these Wretches head-long plunged! It grieves my Soul daily to see so many poor Creatures acting as though they were in Love with Hell; and, what

what is worse, will not believe that they are so acting ; yea, many of them are so infatuated, that, like Swine, they are ready to turn upon those, and rend them, who, in the most tender and friendly Manner, endeavour to shew them their fearful State, and point out to them the Way to escape. God hath lately *arose*, and not only *shook* terribly the *Earth*, but hath swallowed up some Part of it *; and in many Places, if not universally, made the Waters tremble.

My dear Brother, seeing that God's Judgments are abroad in the World, let us endeavour to exhort as many of the Inhabitants of it as God shall cast in our Way, *to learn Righteousness*; and if they will not hear, we shall, in that Respect, have the Satisfaction that we have so far done our Duty in the Office that God, by His Providence, hath put us in. And now, my dear Friend, farewell; and may the G O D of Peace dwell in your Heart here, and give you to dwell with Him hereafter. *Amen and Amen.*

B Y

* In the Case of the City of *Lisbon*; and, at which Time, as it was afterward found, the Waters, almost the Globe through, were in Emotion. The crystalline Waters of the Hot-Wells at *Bristol* were thickened, and became muddy at the same Time.

BY Nature's Volume may we learn
 To speak JEHOVAH's Praise;
 Not for created Things alone,
 But likewise for His Grace.

The various Things His Hands have made,
 In loudest Accents tell
 Of His redeeming Grace and Love,
 Which save lost Souls from Hell.

Had fallen Man but Ears to hear,
 There's Nought that Him surrounds,
 But would Him lecture plain and clear
 On JESU's Blood and Wounds.

Curst was the Earth, and all it bore,
 When there first enter'd Sin:
 CHRIST hath destroy'd both Sin and Curse,
 And Righteousness brought in.

18 AP 68
 Whate'er was lost, there's more regain'd
 By JESU's Blood and Death,
 For each redeemed Son of Mān
 That does or shall draw Breath.

To FATHER, SPIRIT, and the WORD,
 The blest Almighty Three,
 Who made, redeem'd, and saves the Church,
 Eternal Praises be.

T H E E N D.

